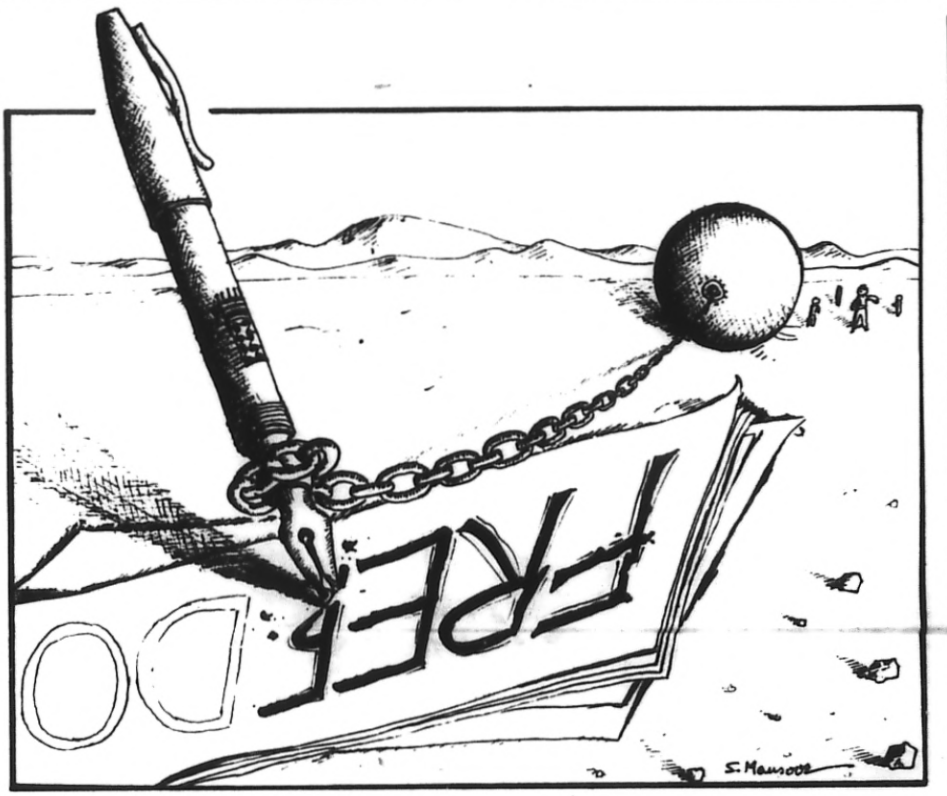
16 PAGES
IS 600

POSTMASTER
Send address changes to
Al-Fajr
2025 I Street N.W.
Washington, D.C.
20006

AL FAJR
JERUSAI
PALESTINIAN WEEKLY
(USPS 606-630

DECEMBER 27, 1985
VOL. VI, NO. 294A

exp. 86/04
Serial Records Division
Harvard College Library
Cambridge, Mass. 02138



This edition of *Al Fajr* English Weekly is unique in a number of ways. First of all, it is only being released in the United States as a gift to our readership. Second, it is crammed full of articles – both features and news – which were censored by the Israeli government over the year. Thus, we are not allowed to print it locally.

Due to the very nature of censorship, the articles printed inside center on the most sensitive areas of Israeli military occupation – particularly, torture in Israeli lock-ups. We don't mean to display a fixation or be unduly depressing, but we do feel the need to get the information out. We hope you understand our reasoning for including so much of the same thing in this issue.

There are weeks here at *Al Fajr* when not much seems to bother the censor. Other weeks, they seem frightened by nearly everything. This issue may give you as reader some insight into the 'fear and trembling' of the Israeli censor. We hope at the very least that it interests you and contributes in a positive way to the national struggle. We at *Al Fajr* wish you a Happy New Year and one in which progress toward our common goal is achieved.

Shin Bet Threaten Galilee Released Prisoners

While newly-released Palestinian prisoners are being continually harassed by Jewish settlers in the West Bank and Gaza, their comrades inside the 'green line' are being harassed by the Israeli Shin Bet secret service and the Interior Ministry.

Thirty released prisoners from Nazareth, Haifa, Tireh and elsewhere within the 'green line' were called in to Shin Bet offices on several occasions last week and warned not to get involved in any political activity "or they will be put behind bars again." They were verbally insulted and told they could not travel freely.

According to some of the released prisoners, the Shin Bet called them in and levelled verbal abuse at them like "no good criminals" and "hopeless creeps." One prisoner was told he would not be able to readjust to society and that he'd "better not get involved in politics if you want to stay out of prison."

The 30 prisoners were among 1050 Palestinians freed when the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command released three Israeli soldiers captured in the 1982 Lebanon war.

The Shin Bet also rejected requests by several released prisoners to have their Israeli passports back. The ex-prisoners' passports were confiscated by the Shin Bet at the time of their arrest. Others who do not possess passports have requested them from the Israeli Interior Ministry but their applications were also denied. The Israeli Interior Ministry, according to Nazareth lawyer Aziz Shehadeh, told the men that it is not desirable for them to travel abroad. They were also verbally abused in the Interior Ministry offices, said Shehadeh, whose brother Walid was released after serving six years of a 20 year sentence.

The Shin Bet harassment and the refusal to issue passports constitute a violation of the agreement between Israel, the International Red Cross, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command. The agreement stipulated that the prisoners not be harassed and that their prison internment not affect their livelihood after their release.

Shehadeh told *Al Fajr* that he is in the process of drafting a letter to the Israeli Interior Ministry demanding an explanation for their unacceptable attitude towards the ex-prisoners. If the ministry's answer is unsatisfactory, he will proceed with legal action against the ministry on behalf of the 30 ex-prisoners, he said. "These men are entitled to the same rights as everyone else in the country, including the right to hold a passport and to travel," Shehadeh told *Al Fajr*. "We will take the case to the Israeli High Court if we have to."

IN THIS ISSUE

- Palestinians not allowed to mourn Karim Khalaf p.5
- Deir Yassin remembered p.7
- An interview with a Palestinian political prisoner pp.8,9
- Report on torture in Fara'a p.13

Youth Kicked in Groin at Fara'a

After a swift and brutal kick to the groin, Adham Mahmoud was hospitalized and forced to undergo surgery. The youth was one in a series of victims of such treatment at Fara'a Detention Center.

Mahmoud, 18, was arrested for the eighth time in three years October 16. He was taken from his Ramallah home and transferred to Fara'a Prison in Nablus.

Following his arrest, Mahmoud told *Al Fajr* in a telephone interview from his bed in Rafidiya Hospital, in Nablus, he was questioned on allegations of throwing stones at Israeli patrols in Ramallah. When he denied the charges, the interrogators ordered him to "put a sack on my head and to stand against the wall." He was made to remain in the same position for 24 hours, he said.

"When I asked the guard to allow me to rest, he attacked me and kicked me in the groin," said Mahmoud. "I fainted and didn't see those who transferred me to hospital." Indeed Mahmoud was taken to hospital October 17 after the guard's attack. He underwent testicular surgery and is now reported to be in good condition.

Mahmoud's hands are shackled to the bed posts. He reports that the doctors have still not informed him of the extent of his injuries. Two policemen stand guard in his room.

Since 1982, Mahmoud has been arrested eight times. Each time he was held 18 to 20 days. Mahmoud told *Al Fajr* that he was arrested five months ago on charges of throwing stones at Israeli soldiers in August 1984 in the Ramallah area. "I denied the charge saying I was in jail at the time," said Mahmoud. Still they did not release him and held him in jail for 18 days.

Mahmoud was arrested the first time in 1982. After severe beatings, he confessed that he had demonstrated illegally and was fined a sum of money now equal to JD120.

A relative of Mahmoud told *Al Fajr* that Mahmoud began suffering from diabetes in jail because of the bad conditions in Fara'a.

Rabbi Moshe Hirsch poses with the new passport

Neturei Karta **Issues**

'Passports' to

Anti-Zionist Members

The ultra-orthodox Jewish organization Neturei Karta is in the process of issuing travel documents to all its members hoping that one day they will replace *state-issued passports*. The organization is staunchly anti-Zionist.

The new travel documents will also serve as identification papers distinguishing the bearer from Zionist Israelis in case of hijackings, according to Rabbi Moshe Hirsch, a distinguished member of Neturei Karta.

Jewish travellers have been taken hostage in the past during hijackings and they were "automatically treated as Zionists," the rabbi said. In view of this, he added, "the Neturei Karta Seven-Man Supreme Council decided to issue a travel document (passport) which identifies the bearer as a Jewish anti-Zionists."

"The hijackers are not against Jews *per se*," said Hirsch. "They are fighting for a cause against those who caused their suffering."

According to Hirsch, who is considered the organization's foreign minister, Neturei Karta filed many years ago with the United Nations for permission to issue non-Zionist Jews passports bearing its name. The UN, he said, failed to respond to their request. An opportunity recently arose, he said, for them to issue their own travel documents.

The thousands of Neturei Karta members — most of whom reside in West Jerusalem, London and New York — currently carry passports issued from their state of citizenship. All are staunch opponents of Zionist ideology and do not recognize Israel as a Jewish state. The Jerusalem-based Neturei Karta refers to itself as Palestinian.

On the 'passport,' which is written in English, Arabic and Hebrew, the text reads, "This is to confirm that the bearer of this certificate is *A Jew, Not a Zionist* and has no connection with the nationalist movement *which has gained control over* the Holy Land and turned it into a Zionist state by falsely assuming the Jewish names of Zion and Israel." The 'passport' is signed by Yosef Goldstein, an officer in Neturei Karta. The document is currently being issued in London.

Rabbi Hirsch told *Al Fajr* that thousands of applications have arrived at the Neturei Karta offices requesting the travel document. He said he expects thousands more to apply for it. He added that he expects many states will recognize their new travel document once they realize they mean business.

In other developments related to Neturei Karta, the Israeli Egged bus company decided this week to stop running any more buses to the orthodox Jewish neighborhood known as Mea Shearim in West Jerusalem. The Egged decision came in light of stone attacks on company buses travelling through the neighborhood. Four buses were stoned November 1 causing damage to their windshields.

In addition to stoning buses, bus shelters are also regularly vandalized by members of the orthodox community. Orthodox Jews oppose placement of what they call 'profane' advertisements on the shelters. Advertisement companies put up posters showing women in bathing suits and underwear. The orthodox community has strict rules regarding the dress of women passing through their neighborhoods. They therefore look at the advertisements as offensive to their religious feelings.

Lawyer Compares Israeli Occupation to Apartheid

by Faiza Blashak

"We've lived under occupation for a week witnessing apartheid in the Holy Land," said lawyer Aubrey McCutcheon at the annual Palestine Aid Society fundraiser November 22 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

McCutcheon, of the National Conference of Black Lawyers, addressed the dinner after returning from a fact-finding mission in the occupied territories.

"Each and every human right has been violated in the occupied territories," said McCutcheon. "Free speech leads to arrest, 2500 books have been banned and even obituaries are censored. People have no right to assemble, and Palestinians are subject to administrative detention — an arbitrary form of arrest with no recourse to legal counsel or a trial. Torture is institutionalized and prisoners are denied medical treatment," he said.

McCutcheon praised artist Fathi Ghabin, who was jailed for painting the colors of the Palestinian flag, and an 80-year-old man whose house was bulldozed by the military authorities and who, nevertheless, remained on his property in a tent. "I also salute Bassam Shaka'a, the major of Nablus, whose legs were blown off by Israeli terrorists in retribution for his allegiance to the Palestine Liberation Organization," he said.

McCutcheon then drew parallels between apartheid in South Africa and military repression in Palestine. "Palestinians, like South African Blacks, live in Bantustans. Two-thirds of the West Bank and Gaza labor force daily commute to Israel for employment, and Palestinian workers, like their South African sisters and brothers, have to use passes for identification in their own country. Palestinian Arabs, like South African Blacks, constitute a cheap, expendable and exploited labor force for the colonialist settler state," he said.

McCutcheon continued: "In view of the structural similarities between institutionalized apartheid in South Africa and Israel, it isn't surprising that the economies of the two racist regimes are very dependent on each other. Israel is South Africa's largest arms supplier, and Israeli military experts provide special training to South Africans in methods of counterinsurgency. At the time when the majority of the countries of the world don't recognize South Africa, Israel is the largest investor in the Bantustans. And by channeling American imports into South Africa, Israel undermines the boycotts gained by the struggle of the Free South Africa Movement."

McCutcheon criticized the US role in Israel and in South Africa. "The US role," he said, "has been to consistently support and consolidate the oppressive policies of apartheid. The 1986 foreign aid budget allocates 4.5 billion dollars to Israel — this translates into a daily assistance of 14 million American tax dollars, while Reagan's foreign budget disposes of a meager US$255 million in famine relief funds for the entire African continent."

McCutcheon ended his remarks by calling on "oppressed minorities" to unite. "Our role as oppressed minorities in America — whether Black, Hispanic, Native or Arab — is to join forces in the struggle for liberation at home as well as abroad, from Philadelphia to Palestine to South Africa," he said.

PAS is a non-profit charitable organization for the relief of refugees in West Bank, Gaza and Lebanese camps.

US Citizen Detained At Ben Gurion

The Israelis detained a US citizen at the Ben Gurion Airport January 3 and held him for 26 hours under threat of deportation. No reason was given.

Tucker Qeitone, 26, an American Indian who works as a volunteer teacher at the Friends Boys' School in Ramallah, was detained upon his return from a short trip to the US. He and his wife have been living in Ramallah with their three children for two years.

Airport officials held Qeitone and threatened to have him deported on the January 5 KLM flight to New York. Although Qeitone has a valid work permit issued by the Ramallah area military governor, his attorney, Lea Tsemel, told *Al Fajr* that there appears to have been a communication gap between the various Israeli departments. She said that despite the fact that her client possessed a valid work permit, the Interior Ministry in Jerusalem was unaware of this and thus has refused to issue him a permanent visa. Qeitone's three previous visit visas have expired but the work permit automatically entitles him to a visa.

The Friends School officials, relatives and friends of Qeitone frantically contacted lawyers, Israeli officials and diplomats at the US Consulate in East Jerusalem in an effort to reverse the decision. Twenty-four hours after Qeitone's arrival at Ben Gurion Airport, his wife Becky was informed by US embassy officials that they had convinced Israeli officials to allow her husband into the country. Tsemel noted that Qeitone was saved from being deported because he adamantly refused to embark on any plane leaving Ben Gurion Airport. According to international IATA air traffic rules, a pilot can refuse to take off if any passenger on the plane has been forced to embark against his will.

According to the US official, Qeitone was given a visa until February 27, by which time he is supposed to clear his status.

Two Ramallah Youths Arrested

Israeli soldiers detained two youths from the village of al-Mazra'ah al-Gharbiyeh on the night of July 22. No specific charges were given for the arrest.

According to sources in the village, which is located northwest of Ramallah, Israeli soldiers raided the family homes of Sayeh Abd al-Hafez and Yasser Shehadeh, both 16 years old, and arrested them. The soldiers refused to answer repeated inquiries from family members about the reasons for the arrest.

A village source told *Al Fajr* they expect the two youths will be released soon, after paying heavy fines. During the past two months Israeli troops arrested at least seven other youths from the same village, also for unspecified reasons. All were released after paying fines.

One al-Mazra'ah resident said that youths who were previously rounded up had been jailed without charges. "They were not even asked to confess to anything," he said. Only when they were brought to a quick trial were they accused of "empty" charges like writing graffiti on walls. They were then ordered to pay fines ranging between JD50-60 (US$125-150). The fines were paid at the Ramallah area military headquarters.

Likewise workers from the Bir Zeit area reported last week that a similar campaign of arrests was going on in the villages of Kobar, Abu Shkheidem and Abu Qash, all near Bir Zeit.

Military Closed BZU; Freeze Did Not 'Hamper Our Spirit'

An Israeli soldier enters a Bir Zeit village bus looking for students to prevent them from attempting to go to Bir Zeit University./AFP Photo.

by Baher Ashhab

By the time Israeli border police left Bir Zeit University after their midnight raid, March 1, they had detained 50 students, confiscated hundreds of books and documents, harassed four university officials and five guards, and smashed open several campus doors and lockers. Israeli officials then declared BZU a closed military area for one week and later, on March 8, ordered the closure of its new campus, used by 60 percent of the students, for two months.

The military claimed it found "inflammatory material" in a book exhibit being held on the new campus and thus it considered BZU a "terrorist citadel that must close in order to preserve security." BZU officials on the other hand cried foul play and declared that the point of this army campaign was to "damage the reputation of BZU in order to limit its ability to function as an academic institution."

Regardless of the reason for the closure, over 2400 Palestinian youth paid the price: their academic year was interrupted and their education put in jeopardy.

Only three weeks had remained of the first semester of this academic year when the order to shut down BZU was given. It posed a difficult problem to administration and faculty and of course displeased students, especially those due to graduate. The old campus can by no means accommodate all of the 2400 students and 520 faculty members and staff at the same time. It had squeezed the faculty of arts and its 800 students and faculty and a few services, such as adult education, the community health center and the women's dormitory, onto the too-small campus with not a spare square meter.

With the closure of the new campus, BZU lost classroom space and offices of the faculties of science, engineering and commerce, all of its science and engineering laboratories and the testing lab of the Center for Environmental Health and Occupational Safety. A new main library, due to open April 1, and the science and engineering library also became inaccessible to faculty and students for the two-month period.

All administration offices, registration, accounting, the main computer, personnel, public relations, the bookstores and general services were suddenly out-of-bounds, freezing most official functions of the university. Despite the logistic problems, the university administration decided that studies at BZU would proceed. In the words of Acting President Gabi Baramki, "A university is more than just facilities. It is above all a community of teachers and students. We will continue to function and to provide students with education. We will not surrender two months of academic life by military order despite the immense difficulties we face."

The physical setbacks, serious as they were, were discussed intensively and solutions proposed during several emergency meetings by BZU officials and staff. How to provide facilities for 1600 science, engineering and commerce students who had no classrooms, laboratories or libraries, and for over 400 faculty and staff without offices or files...

A suggestion to rotate the four faculties' use of the available space on the old campus was put forward and unanimously accepted. The faculties of arts and commerce were scheduled to share facilities until the end of term, March 29. The other two faculties, science and engineering, were asked to take a three-week mid-year holiday before finishing their first semester. Staff of all faculties were advised to take their annual vacation during the break, in anticipation of an accelerated summer schedule which would allow a two-week vacation at most. Office personnel were told to work where they are needed, as a floating pool of workers in university service.

The second semester is now scheduled to begin April 21 for the university's full student body although the new campus cannot be 'unsealed' until May 1. "We have not dealt with this problem yet," explained one university official. "We are working on a new schedule which will have to be as creative as the first one. How we are going to do it? I cannot predict."

BZU officials had to make up in creativity what they lacked in space in order for studies to continue. The cramped old campus could only offer 25 classrooms, already occupied by the 800 arts students; 10 more lecture rooms had to be found to accommodate the 400 commerce students. To solve this problem, officials negotiated to borrow rooms from the nearby Catholic church and an elementary social. Together they offered three lecture halls, and seven more were created out of office spaces. "In one case over 30 students were squeezed in an office that had housed three staff members," said one official. "Somehow it seems like war time." One student said he found it fascinating but "distracting" to receive a lecture on macro-economics in a church prayer hall. Staff were squeezed into smaller offices or made to do without offices at all.

Lectures were extended to Fridays and Sundays, usually weekend days, to speed the semester for the 500 courses and sections comprising 1500 credit hours per week. Classes were also rearranged for late afternoon slots inconveniencing many with part-time jobs or far away residences. Individual grievances necessarily had to be ignored in order to make the schedule workable, according to a public relations officer. "We just had to continue offering our services despite several conflicts that arose."

The only people who found the closure of the new campus advantageous were perhaps owners of the several restaurants and coffee shops near the old campus. One coffee shop owner said that his business had almost doubled since the arrival of the commerce students on March 8. He expects even better business when the other faculties move in. The campus cafeteria, originally designed to handle no more than 200, was less than adequate for the new guests.

"Complaints poured in as new room and time schedules were posted after reopening," said one public relations employee. People complained about not finding a place to sit in their own office or not finding an office at all. Students were mainly unhappy about the unavailability of their instructors for consultations. One employee remarked, "The whole ordeal is a challenge and we have to prove ourselves and the university tough fighters in the face of Israeli military tactics."

Setbacks

The hardest hit by the closure were the science and engineering faculties and the Environmental Health and Occupational Safety department since all of their offices and laboratories are on the new campus. "Almost all our lab experiments and research are ruined, months and in some cases years of research has gone to waste," complained one biology instructor w e department had been undertaking research on epilepsy and diabetes on more than 40 laboratory rats. The research must be completely scratched and begun again from point zero since the precisely controlled conditions and monitoring of the animals can no longer be maintained. Several other experiments using test animals or plants were also halted, in addition to the loss of chemical substances and organic materials due to prolonged refrigeration.

The environmental health staff were in the midst of sensitive research on pesticides in addition to routine pharmaceutical drugs analysis. They had begun analysis for Maqassed Hospital on hundreds of samples of commercial drugs. The lab — the only one in the occupied territories that determines the quality of new drugs for pharmacy sale and hospital use — is now closed by military order. The potential hazard to public health is great. "We fear our inability to carry on research will result in the marketing of untested or even unreliable drugs for public consumption," said one researcher. He and his colleagues are now doing field studies or office work that is not necessarily pressing or urgent. "We used to spend all our time in the lab. The closure disrupted our routine and curtailed our work."

All laboratory experiments and applied studies will be postponed until next semester when they can either be joined with or replace next semester's lab work. Engineering projects will also be postponed, according to one engineering instructor. This will probably delay the first class to graduate from BZU's engineering college by at least several weeks.

With the main library behind closed doors on the new campus, major papers and research essays will necessarily be put off. The arts library on the old campus does not provide the number and quality of references for the science, engineering or commerce students. One official offered the hope that Bethlehem or Najah universities could offer library services to BZU, "although such a solution is not convenient considering their busy schedule and far location."

The BZU administration was left in the lurch with no computer, no payroll records and no student grade records among other crucial items. Administration staff had attempted to obtain military permission to enter the closed campus to retrieve important records. They were only allowed a 15-minute scramble and then were restricted to carrying back only student grade records. "Not even student engineering projects, which are an important part of their semester grades were allowed out of the new campus," explained one high official. "It is obvious that the military simply does not want us to function as an academic institution at all."

The closure has put a large financial strain on the administration. While students will not be asked to pay for the extended semester they will need to make up for time lost to the closure; the faculty and staff must be paid fully. The administration is further frustrated by the added delay in construction of several new campus buildings, including the main library.

"We are facing several difficulties," explained Albert Aghazarian, assistant to the president, "but they will not hamper our spirit. Our duty is to provide education to young Palestinians and that is exactly what we will continue to do."

"The students are extremely cooperative," explained one instructor. "They seem to understand what is going on and they are doing their utmost to cooperate." Marwan Barghouti, elected two months ago as president of the student body, said that the students felt that they should strongly protest the military order but did not want to give the army any excuses to disrupt academic life. "What we are doing now is to first cooperate with faculty in facilitating educational procedures and, secondly, to contact local and international media and friends in universities all over the world to keep them well informed of military actions against BZU." Through these actions coupled with administration actions in the same field, Barghouti hopes for international pressure on the Israeli government to reopen the new campus. One student remarked sarcastically, however, that "if a request by the US State Department to reopen BZU did not produce results, what will!?" ■

Meron Benvenisti

Jerusalem researcher Meron Benvenisti has been studying the effect of Israel's occupation of the West Bank for several years. During this time he has become known as the leading advocate of the theory that 'it's too late' to reverse the situation. He recently outlined his research findings and opinions in an interview with Udi Nahshon for *Al Hamishmar*.

Benvenisti: 'I Shake Some People From Their Dreams'

"For 17 years the Israeli dovish camp tried to stop the creeping annexation of the West Bank but it has become clear that annexation crept, crept... and arrived. They will not say it has arrived because this recognition is discomforting — to both hawks and doves. Today we must face the situation that has arisen." These are the words of Meron Benvenisti, who has completed a wide-ranging research, the first of its kind, about the changes that have taken place in the (West) Bank since its conquest and the economic and social price of Israeli settlement within its boundaries.

Meron Benvenisti is a former deputy-mayor of Jerusalem and was the second candidate on (Shulamit Aloni's Citizens Rights) list for the Knesset in the last elections. In his research for his doctorate he studied ethnic conflicts — comparing Belfast and Jerusalem. For the past two years he was occupied in preparing this research which is financed by the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations in the framework of the project called *West Bank Data Base Project*. In the first year 14 researchers published booklets on various fields: agriculture and water, industry, demography, security and administration, censorship and legal aspects and others. These publications were edited by Benvenisti in a book that will be published in the US at the end of March. According to the research findings, public investment in civil projects in the West Bank since 1967 has been US$1.5 billion. US$750 million were invested under Labour Party rule and about US$800 million under the Likud. That is, since the election of the Likud six years ago, US$120 million per annum were invested in infrastructure (not including expenses for security projects).

The Plan May Possibly Succeed

Q: What are the outstanding stages in the settlement policy from 1967 to today?

Benvenisti: In the Alon Plan there was investment along the Jordan Valley according to geo-strategic concepts. The intention was to erect self-supporting settlements (kibbutzim, moshavim, etc). The investment per settler in these settlements was much higher compared with today because the settlers needed means of production, water, land, etc. This stage failed and the number of settlers in the region is very low.

At the end of the Rabin government's days Kaddum and Ofra were established based on an urban concept called then 'The Ofer Plan to Thicken Jerusalem' (Ofer was a Labour minister who was called a 'dove' and who committed suicide after public accusations of financial irregularities — tr.), which related to Efrath, Givat Zeev, Beit El and Ma'aleh Adumim. To these were added Ariel and Elkana. The plans for thickening Jerusalem were prepared under the Rabin government and the Likud only implemented them. However, at the centre of the second stage stood Gush Emunim plans to settle the central mountain range and the Settlement Department, headed by Matityahu Drobless, started to bring it forth. However, this plan also failed and the number of settlers in this region, including Kiryat Arba, is very small (a few thousand).

The third stage started in 1979-'80. This is the stage of peripheral settlement — settlements only 20-25 minutes travel from Tel Aviv or 15 minutes from Jerusalem. In my opinion, there is a very big chance that this plan will succeed. The two ideological stages ended in failure but the materialistic stage has all the chances (or from a different point of view: all the dangers) to succeed. The government understood very quickly that peripheral settlement had a big potential and today it invests about 85 percent of its resources in these regions. In calculating the expenses per settler, the peripheral settlements are relatively cheaper because it is possible to use the existing infrastructure in the Greater Tel Aviv area. This (style of) settlement also has an additional economic advantage — some of the investment is not public; private investors are prepared to invest in these suburbs. This also is the direction of development for the future because it is impossible to create a significant demographic change by the means of the small settlements of the Gush Emunim.

Q: Will the peripheral settlement also meet with less objection?

Benvenisti: Yes, because the lands have already been confiscated. The outcry has taken place already at Ma'aleh Adumim. Now they will call for the thickening of Ma'aleh Adumim, and therefore from the political aspect the process will be accompanied in the third stage with less tremors than in the previous stages.

This situation angers the architects of the settlement policy and therefore they have decided now to erect 15 *mitzpah* (strongholds). Indeed, they see that there are no people for them, however, they have not conceded the hope of taking over all resources. The control will not be done by people but by fixing facts in areas that don't need settlers, like *mitzpah*, nature reservations, field schools and other centres. There will be an Israeli presence on the mountains through physical facts. Now cuts are made in the state budget and they argue they don't have money but the real problem is that there are no people and so instead of settlements they erect strongholds because soldiers may be sent anywhere.

The failure of the mountain settlements doesn't prove anything about the periphery. A large part of the dovish camp wants to view the whole settlement system as a failure. I want to warn them not to consider the peripheral settlements a failure.

A Refuted Dispute

Q: During disputes over the possible establishment of a national unity government and over the economy, the Likud leaders, including the finance minister, said the majority of the settlement budget is invested within the boundaries of the 'Alon Plan.' This claim has remained unanswered. Is it true?

Benvenisti: It is true, if it is related to the Alon Plan in its later versions. The latest version of the Alon Plan is included in the Labour Party platform for the 1981 elections. Additions to the 1968 plan included the thickening of Jerusalem and, by Israel Galili, chairman of the ministerial committee for settlement affairs, the setting up of Ariel and Elkana. If we summarise all the Labour Alignment settlement planning, including the Rabin government's as expressed in the 1981 election platform, then the decisive majority of finances intended for settlements today are directed to places included in the plans. Therefore, the dispute over the establishment of a national unity government concerned the fragment of the fragments. You'll remember before the last elections (Labour Party leader) Shimon Peres sent a letter to the Ariel settlers saying: "Don't believe the Likud, it was us who approved the setting up of Ariel."

Q: Then Labour has a problem?

Benvenisti: Labour has a problem with itself. Usually Labour supporters attack me. I anger them because of these connections. Mapam too.

Q: What are the significant findings on the legal side?

Benvenisti: The most outstanding thing is the establishment of systems; that is, if anyone expects, desires or fears annexation, they can relax — there will be no annexation. The system is already established in such a manner that it can incorporate the legal systems without the need for a dramatic act of annexation. This relates both to Jews and Arabs.

Relating to Jews the establishment is expressed in that Israeli law is carried on the settlers' shoulders everyplace they go. This has an administrative and legal establishment through the regional and local councils, courts, etc. The establishment exists also relating to Arabs. The 'civil administration' has returned the systems of action and administration that were in practice in the Galilee in the 1950s — a military governorate that acts according to the same systems. When they decided, after the 1977 Likud takeover, that the occupation is not temporary, the system got established.

Q: It's possible that the system will further develop as it developed in the Galilee in the 1950s.

Benvenisti: The Israeli administration maintains that it will succeed in adjusting to deal with 1,300,000 Arabs just as it succeeded with 200,000 Arabs, and I think this is a mistake. But this is how domination is constructed. In any case, the fact should be made clear that there is no need for a dramatic act.

Q: What are the outstanding developments in the economic field?

Benvenisti: In the economic field (the) outstanding (development) is the improvement of the individual and family's standard of living, in comparison with the cutback, freezing and strangulation of all communal developments. This was a deliberate policy aimed at the elimination of (Arab) capital-accumulation as the basis from which it is possible to construct a political system. A system of economic subordination was created that enables the standard of living to rise through work in Israel but eliminates the creation of a separate economic set-up for the Arab sector, to stop such a system being used as an infrastructure for political activity.

We have taken all the development potentials in land, water and industry and left the Arabs what they had in 1967. This fact should be emphasised because usually the Israelis are proud that the GNP *per capita* has increased dramatically. This is true but this is only one side of the coin. The other side is the freeze in development.

Q: How is this reflected in the increase in construction?

Benvenisti: Residential construction is a form of consumption and the Arabs indeed build a lot but only for residential purposes. The increase in residential construction since 1967 is 1400 percent — hundreds of thousands of square metres in comparison with tens of thousands — but the increase in public building is 10 percent of the increase in 1967. This is more proof of the tremendous gap between personal welfare and retreat on the communal level. In the short range, this contains a positive element from the perspective of domination because the people have an interest to continue to live passively and, indeed, we are bribing them.

However, in the long run this is a stupid policy because if the Arabs have private capital then they send their children to universities (there are five universities in the (West) Bank) and finally this creates — like with the Israeli Arabs — an educational accumulation, and as a result of this also an economic accumulation, and then what seems a solution in the short-run becomes a booby-trap in the long run. It's important to emphasise this because they say to the Israeli public: 'Our occupation is enlightened. Look at their standard of

Continued on page 13

The Dawn
AL FAJR
AL FAJR – Jerusalem Palestinian Weekly

Publisher:
Paul A. Ajlouny
Editor:
Hanna Siniora

Tel: (02) 281035
P.O. Box 19315
2 Hatem at-Taee St.
East Jerusalem 91192

Telex no.s:
Jerusalem: 26467 omar il
Washington: 64677 omar uw

Al Fajr was founded in 1972 by Yusef Nasr, who edited the paper until his kidnapping in 1974. The English edition was first published in April 1980. **The Dawn (Al Fajr) Jerusalem Palestinian Weekly (UPS 686630)** is published weekly for £50.00 per year by Paul Ajlouny, 16 Crowell St., Hempstead. N.Y. 11550. Second class postage paid at Hempstead, N.Y.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Al Fajr 2025 I Street, N.W., Suite 925, Washington D.C., 20006.

Our Dreams Make Us 'Criminal'

Nearly every day last week we were awakened to news of new arrests of Palestinians under the guise of the recently revived administrative detention policy. Palestinian university students, trade unionists, and activists in voluntary work groups have been rounded up *en masse*. Their arrest and detention without trial is part of the new Israeli government's 'iron fist policy'.

Israeli military officials are implementing this latest policy in response to demands put forth by the Jewish Settlement Council in the West Bank. Among other things the council called for the closure of Palestinian universities and the disbanding of Palestinian voluntary movements.

A large number of detainees have been active in the various voluntary movements that have grown during the past few years. These movements of young Palestinians have been formed in order to render public service to their society. The activities of these groups – usually undertaken on Saturday when most laborers working in Israel are on holiday – include clean-up campaigns of streets and cemeteries, the paving of badly needed roads, and the repair of rundown refugee camps. These activities carried out by Palestinian youths with their picks and spades have become punishable by six-month detention orders.

Israeli strategists and public officials have again erred in their perception of what policies work to 'quieten down' people under occupation. As in South Lebanon, Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip will not close shop and kiss the occupier's feet. It doesn't take an expert to realize that such oppressive Israeli actions increase rather than decrease activities that are unpleasant to Israelis.

Although they claim that the administrative detentions, deportations and other actions are carried out in order to prevent hostility, the real reason behind this policy is simply to punish Palestinians because they insist on demanding their national rights and dream of a better future for themselves and the generations to come. If this is a crime, then we are all criminals.

AL FAJR – Jerusalem Palestinian Weekly

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: ONE YEAR: US$50.00

NAME. . . . . .

ADDRESS. . . . . .

ENCLOSED IS A CHEQUE FOR THE AMOUNT . . . . . .

DATE. . . . . .

SIGNED . . . . . .

Mail to:
Al Fajr Palestinian Weekly
PO Box 19315
East Jerusalem
Via Israel

In US:
Al Fajr Palestinian Weekly
2025 I St. NW, Suite 925
Washington DC, 20006 USA

Palestinians Not Allowed to Mourn Karim Khalaf

by Kate Rouhana

Last week Karim Khalaf, the elected-and-deposed mayor of Ramallah, died of a heart attack in exile in Jericho. The next day, Zalman Abulnik, a Jewish settler who served on the Israeli-appointed town council that had replaced Khalaf's when it was dismissed in 1982, was shot while shopping in the Ramallah market.

These two deaths, one Arab and one Jewish, bound together by the curious relationship of dismissal and replacement that could almost be said to symbolize the *status quo* in the West Bank, received vastly different treatment from the Israelis. Replete with ironies, the two deaths and the swirl of events that followed merit comparison and introspection on two levels: first, the Israeli response to violence committed against both men (in Khalaf's case, in 1980), and second, the scope of mourning permitted to the friends and family of the two last week.

The Israelis are reputed worldwide for the way they value the lives of their citizens and their soldiers, for their Jewish values of humanism, and for angsting over the morality of this or that issue or event. But they are less well-known for their differentiation between the value of Jewish lives and those of all others, particularly Arabs. The Arab's life, to the Israeli Jew, is often worth very little. This discrepancy and double standard is part of daily life on the West Bank and inside Israel, but last week its presence was acutely felt at each turn of events.

When Abulnik was shot, a curfew was the immediate response. It was clearly a case of collective punishment, not criminal expediency. Had the goal been to search for the murderer, the curfew would have been much shorter and, at the very least, some house-to-house searches would have been made. Instead, approximately 35,000 residents of the twin cities of Ramallah and al-Bireh were made to sacrifice one week of their daily routines because a Jewish settler was killed in the heart of an Arab city.

If an Arab were killed in Tel Aviv, can one ever imagine the government imposing a seven-day round-the-clock curfew on the city?

Some residents of Ramallah and al-Bireh paid a much higher price – those randomly rounded up for interrogation at the scene of the killing, for example, and the 23 stores whose yellow shutters were marked with an ineradicable black X, singling them out for two months' closure just because they happen to be located at the site of the incident. Guilty by contiguity. On the very eve of Passover, the irony of these X's – recalling those of another age in Egypt, thousands of years ago – deserves at least some thought and a wry smile.

The week of punishment levied on all residents of Ramallah and al-Bireh for an act they did not collectively commit stands in sharp contrast to the response of the military administration when Karim Khalaf was crippled in an explosion set by the Jewish terrorist underground in 1980. Quite simply they did next to nothing. They never even bothered to

Continued on page 15

Revolution Can No Longer Tolerate Delinquency

Yasser Arafat was right when he condemned the Larnaca killings and the Achille Lauro hijacking. He was right again when he voiced his intentions to scrutinize the actions of the hijackers and punish them accordingly. In his capacity as leader of the revolution, he spoke the minds of many Palestinians who can no longer tolerate sporadic, unjustifiable acts of terror by certain Palestinian elements done in the name of liberation.

The Palestinian revolution is no longer a young revolution now that it has survived 21 years of unrelenting struggle to achieve its goal. In other words, it can no longer afford to appear delinquent. Although delinquent adolescence is predictable after a stormy childhood, maturation is, however, always a desired end in itself and has to be achieved if self-destruction is to be avoided.

Riddles aside, the Palestinian revolution suffered a great deal when during the seventies and again in the early eighties, it branched out in several, often opposite, directions. Not only did some Palestinian groups initiate a revolution of their own, they also doubted the credibility of the once, sole leadership of the revolution in the person of Arafat.

This, of course, allowed for deviation from the central, strategic plan that is essential for any peoples revolution to succeed. Each group had their own logistics to follow, their own militias and media. Each group acted upon their own initiative. Arafat, for the sake of what was left of Palestinian unity, often overlooked their actions and stinging accusations. He even invited them to publicly challenge his leadership in the framework of the PNC forum last year.

Yasser Arafat in Cairo: "We are against terrorism."

by Baher Ashhab

Arafat's courage and persistence made up for the deviators' mistakes, with him apologizing for their actions and mending the resultant damage. He almost paid for one such mistake with his own life when by a twist of fate Israeli jets missed him as they bombed his offices in Tunis.

The damage that the Larnaca and Achille Lauro incidents have caused to the Palestinian image abroad and to Arafat's credibility are, however, too great to overlook. They have provided easy gains for Israeli propagandists not to mention the setback in the Palestinian position in the peace process.

Can Palestinians afford repetition of these incidents? Can we ever convince the world of the authenticity of their plight in light of these sporadic and irresponsible acts? What can Arafat do to contain actions that hurt the common purpose and hinder the common strategy?

The answer may well lie in Arafat's public position on the situation and in his defined and consistent political and military strategy which he should enforce as the legitimate leader of the Palestinian people, until, at least, he is proven otherwise.

In other words, what he as leader of the PLO declares as policy should be transmitted to the world as the policy of the Palestinians as a whole. All other policies or personal actions by those who refuse to argue from within the democratic nature of the PLO should be dismissed by him as hogwash. His next move is to dissociate himself and the revolution from those who insist on working on their own. They must first be invited to rejoin the mother-body of the PLO and work from within it and according to its laws and regulations. If they do not, let them carry the responsibility and face the consequences of their actions, not the revolution and not its leadership.

Arafat should make that clear to the Palestinian people and to the world community (i.e. who is in charge).

Israeli politicians often argue that they would like to talk to Palestinians, but do not know to whom to talk. Is it not about time we tell them? Arafat was right when he said that "we are against terrorism." Now we shall prove it.

Kahanism Born of Zionism

For reasons having mainly to do with public relations, some Israeli officials as well as many pro-Israeli propagandists in the West have been lately trying to play down the repugnant phenomenon of Kahanism. Very often the dangers of the Kahanist movement are minimized, underestimated or simply ignored. Sometimes misleading euphemisms are used to describe the thoughts and deeds of the man who considers the Arabs scum, vermin and dirty animals that ought to be exterminated.

Well, in the short run, it may be propagandistically expedient for Israeli officials to pretend that Kahanism is an aberration or an unfortunate misuse of democracy that could occur in any democratic country.

But the excruciating fact is that Kahanism is neither an aberration nor is it a marginal phenomenon in Israel's political arena. Quite the opposite, opinion polls conducted recently show that Kahanism has become a somewhat popular philosophy among many Israelis, especially young people and soldiers. In Kiryat Arba, the Kahanist Kach movement received 22 percent of the total votes in the Jewish settlement's local council election held early last month. Following the election, the Kahanist Kach formed a coalition with the Watch-Ha'tzeni bloc which, among other things, calls for the dismissal of Arab workers at Kiryat Arba.

Kahanist philosophy, it must be made clear, did not start with the arrival in Israel of the American-born rabbi. Its dogmatic framework and ideological tenets are deeply rooted in the Zionist philosophy, which always stressed that the "Palestinian Arabs" are merely residents in the land of Israel and that they are not entitled to equal status with the Jews.

Meir Kahane with his supporters in West Jerusalem.

The eventual expulsion of the Palestinians and the obliteration of the Arab identity of the occupied lands have always been the most paramount strategic goal for the Zionist movement. The declared rationalization is to prevent a possible de-Judaization of Israel.

When Likud leaders are confronted with the questions of the possibility of Arabs forming one day a numerical majority in *Eretz Israel*, they seem to be anything but short on solutions. Arik Sharon says it very bluntly. For him, the Palestinians have to go to Palestine, and Palestine is Jordan.

Needless to say, the only difference between Kahane on the one hand, and Begin, Shamir and Sharon on the other, is that his deeds are a vociferous expression of their thoughts. While the Kach leader would like to see the Palestinians expelled willy nilly, the Likudists want to reach the same goal through more benign means. During 10 years of their rule, their undeclared policy in the "administered areas" was to create a situation there in which life would become unbearable for the Palestinians, so much so that they would be forced to contemplate leaving their homeland for good. This strategic task was to be achieved through a variety of means: political repression, physical harassment, economic suffocation, land expropriation, and closure of the institutions of higher learning, just to name a few.

In short, Kahane and the leaders of the Israeli right never differed on principles. The difference lies only in the means used to achieve the same goal. ■

Deir Yassin Massacre Remembered

by Awad Abdal Fatah

One of the few Palestinian homes remaining in Deir Yassin.

The village of Deir Yassin, which has been made famous as a massacre site rather than a village, conjures up in the minds of Palestinians what Auschwitz has come to mean to Westerners. The scene of the horrible massacre of 249 Palestinian men, women and children by the Zionist troops on April 9, 1948 — and which precipitated a massive exodus of Palestinians from other villages — is now an Israeli mental institution.

Deir Yassin is located in the western hills of West Jerusalem. Huge industrial complexes set up by Israel on the village land after 1948 now greet visitors to the once pastoral area. The name of the pre-state neighboring Jewish settlement, 'Givat Sha'ul', was attached to Deir Yassin, as part of the "Judaization" of those Palestinian villages forcibly in West Jerusalem. What has survived from Deir Yassin still serves as a strong reminder of the history of this village. On the highest hilltop, which commands a strategic position overlooking large areas around Jerusalem, stand the original of the village houses, estimated by former residents to be 60 percent of the total number and which had served as homes for 850 people.

Inside what used to be the main village area, which is now fenced off by wire for the insane asylum, Israeli patients walk around or sit among the once-Arab-owned houses. At the entrance, an iron gate and a guard stop casual visitors. Entry into the village is prohibited if the security officer is absent. Pine trees, obviously planted long years ago, have almost enveloped the one-and two-story houses within.

Despite the fact that the usual identifying marks of a Palestinian village, such as the mosque and the cemetery, have been destroyed, other signs still remain. The beautiful stone fencing and terracing around the village have been left intact. Scattered here and there are olive and almond trees, no longer trimmed and cared for. But the vineyards that were a main crop of the village have completely disappeared, perhaps due to long neglect.

Unlike the rest of the Judaized agricultural Palestinian villages around West Jerusalem, the lack of natural springs in the area and the mountainous terrain forced Deir Yassin's population to seek another source of livelihood besides agriculture. Deir Yassin became dependent on stone-cutting. According to Khamis Zeidan, a 107-year-old former Deir Yassin resident who now lives in Beiteen village, near Ramallah, there were nine quarries and stone-cutting factories. Zeidan was himself an owner of one of the factories. All of the quarries were replaced by massive Israeli industrial complexes. He recalls that the quarries employed most of the people of the village, besides scores of workers from neighboring villages. The famous Jerusalem stones were transported to the city and to other Palestinian towns in trucks and on the backs of camels. "The quality of the rocks in our village was the best," said Zeidan.

The stones were cut with the most basic of tools, consequently the work required much physical strength. Zeidan explained, "We obtained gun powder from the British mandate by permit and exploded the rock piles and then used our muscles to chisel the stone into smaller blocks." The 107-year-old man said that at that time, people were accustomed to hard labor, more so than today.

From Tranquility Bloodshed

The peace and tranquility that used to characterize the village of Deir Yassin, disrupted by only infrequent searches by the British authorities, was dramatically and irrevocably broken in 1948, when Zionist Irgun forces under Menachem Begin sieged the village and murdered 249 people, mostly women and children, in their homes.

Fahmi Jaber, a teacher in a school in al-Ama'ri refugee camp in Ramallah who was an 11-year-old Deir Yassin resident at the time of the massacre recalled that the attacks came from the east, from Givat Sha'ul settlement. "I can't remember everything," he said, "but at dawn, as I opened the door, I found all the village up in smoke." His family was one of the few who managed to leave before the village resistance broke down.

Khamis Zeidan remained in the village shortly before it fell to the attacking Zionist troops and could remember much more about the attack. When the Zionists launched a major attack against Qastal, a neighboring village to the west, a number of people from Deir Yassin went to help. The battle later claimed the life of Abdel Qader Husseini, the leader of the Arab forces.

The Palestinian fighters managed to break the siege around Qastal and Deir Yassin fighters returned to their village in celebration, with three wounded. But the surprise attack against their own village had just started. Shortly after midnight, the siege around Deir Yassin was completed. The Zionist troops were much stronger in number and military equipment; they had tanks and heavy artillery. "But," said Zeidan, "this was no reason for despair; the determination to fight was as strong as iron. We had bought large quantities of weapons, much more than other Palestinian villages, because we were in a relatively better economic situation from the high revenues the stone-cutting business brought in."

The battle lasted seven hours, the fighting moved inside the village, and subsequently battles erupted from house-to-house. "The battle could have ended in much less time" said Zeidan, "had there been no heroic resistance. A group of fighters destroyed two tanks and blocked the road into the village, thus stalling the Zionist forces for a little longer.

During the heat of battle, the village defenders broke through the siege from the western side of the village, thus enabling many of the residents to escape to Ein Kerem, two kilometres from Deir Yassin. It was at this moment that the massacres started. Zeidan witnessed two brutal incidents before he escaped. "Six of the best fighters were captured by the Zionists. They tied them together and sprayed them with bullets. Fifteen women were stripped and forced to ride naked in an open truck through the Jewish neighborhoods. Then they were released in East Jerusalem."

Zeidan believes that if Deir Yassin had had a fighting force similar to the Zionists' fire power, it could have defeated them and taken over Jerusalem. "More than 100 Jewish fighters were killed and wounded," he estimated.

Miriam Akel is another Deir Yassin survivor who now lives in Sheikh Jarrah in Jerusalem. She was 10 years old when her family fled.

Miriam was orphaned during the siege of Deir Yassin. Her parents and four other family members were murdered. She and two brothers managed to escape and make their way to Silwan where they stayed for a month until Hind Husseini opened Dar el-Tifl school in Jerusalem to care for Deir Yassin's orphans. She was taken out of school two years later to help in her mother-in-law's house in the Old City. She later married and moved to Sheikh Jarrah. *Al Fajr* English interviewed Miriam in 1981:

"They fired their first shot in the *furun* (bakery) where 15 to 20 women had gathered to bake their daily bread. They shot the baker, a Hebronite, and shoved a 13-year-old boy into the oven. One woman who tried to run for help was also killed.

"In our three-story house, where we lived as an extended family, we had two guns. My brother and father took turns on guard duty. We separated during the battle. I managed to escape with my four and 12-year-old brothers. My grandfather, father, mother and uncle and my 14 and 18-year-old brothers were killed in our house, according to family members who were captured alive.

"We later learned what happened to other residents and after we counted those missing, we knew that 36 from my clan — Dar Akel — were killed.

"My relatives who escaped related the details of what they had seen: 'The Jews told people to come out of their house,' recalled my aunt. 'I dressed my husband in one of my *thobes* (traditional peasant embroidered dresses). We stepped out of the house and one of the soldiers uncovered the disguise. He took my husband away and I never saw him again.'

"Another woman told the story of her 14-year-old nephew: 'They asked him if he had been in Qastal a day earlier. He told them he had been in school. His mother pleaded with the soldiers to leave her son and she offered to buy his safety. They took 200 Palestinian pounds from her and then pumped five bullets into his head.'

"Though the slaughter continued all day, an officer came at noon with the orders that the killing of women and children, those who had been the main victims, should stop. From then on, only men were killed.

"They accused one young man of having been in Qastal and shot him. They pulled out his red hair in front of his mother.

"They called to a young woman and forced her to stomp on her father's mouth. They said he had fought in Qastal.

Continued on page 10

Deir Yassin today — primarily an industrial zone.

Ex-prisoner:

Political Prisoners Subject to Slow Death

by Sami al-Aboudi

My tape recorder could not record the tears in the eyes of Ahmad Ishaq Beebers when he spoke of his mother and his sister who died while he was serving his 18-year prison sentence. Beebers, now 36, was interviewed by Al Fajr English Weekly just seven days after his release from prison. He was arrested on September 5, 1968, and charged with membership in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PLFP), and participating in planting explosive devices in West Jerusalem on November 18, 1967. Nine Israelis were wounded in the operation.

Beebers was released from prison last January 8, one year short of his full sentence, for medical reasons: in prison he lost his sight in one eye and is partially blind in the other. He charges that the Israeli prison authorities are subjecting Palestinian political prisoners to slow death. He points out that most prisoners suffer from one kind of untreated disease or another. Beebers says that it is not simply the bad conditions in prison — the lack of heating, the unnutritious and insufficient food — but the poor medical treatment which results in chronic ailments among prisoners.

The obviously tired ex-prisoner, however, insists that his long years in prison did not weaken his belief in the ultimate triumph of the Palestinian struggle. "It is always harder to break a politically aware nation," he maintains.

Q: Can you tell us the details of your arrest 17 years ago?

A: I was arrested on September 5, 1968, and was charged with membership in a Palestinian organization, and participating in a military operation — putting an explosive device in the 1948 occupied West Jerusalem.

Q: What military operation are you talking about?

A: It is known to our people and to the Israeli occupation authorities as well. The Israeli occupation called it the 'night of bombs' in Jerusalem. The group which was rounded up with me was charged also with the bombing of the Tel Aviv (bus) station on September 4, 1968. [One person was killed and 51 others were wounded in the operation.]

Q: Can you recall how you were arrested? Was anyone else arrested with you?

A: Following the Tel Aviv central (bus) station operation (September 4), two commandos who carried out the attack were arrested and forced to make confessions. On their confessions, the entire group was rounded up, including myself. Those included Said Atallah, Salah Shahin (he died in the Lebanon war in 1982), Khamis Salaymeh, Nawaf Zaru, Ali Jaddeh, Mahmoud Jaddeh, and others. Some were freed in the first prisoner exchange agreements in 1979 (known as al-Nawras operation) but others are still locked up.

"THE ISRAELIS WOULD USE ANY OPPORTUNITY TO PRESSURE PRISONERS TO COLLABORATE."

Q: Can you describe how you were arrested?

A: I remember it was a Thursday. An Israeli Shin Bet (secret police) car came to my work at the local health department in Wadi al-Joz after 10:00 a.m. I was working as a telephone operator then. One Israeli military man, and some civilian-dressed Shin Bet men told me that they wanted me to go with them to the Moscobiyeh [Jerusalem detention centre] for five minutes. On the road, they told me I was a 'terrorist', and they took me to my house to search it. At home, they beat me in front of my sisters and my sister-in-law as they searched the house. They did not find anything.

They then took me to Moscobiyeh, where they began interrogating me. The Israelis had written confessions for me. They forced confessions from me, and I am sure from others as well, by excessive beating.

After this, we were remanded for one month. We were locked up all day in a small cell with a tiny window high up. There was little food. The three meals they gave us did not amount to one adequate meal. Later on we were transferred to Ramleh Prison, where I remained until 1980.

Q: We always hear that prison conditions, especially at the beginning of the Israeli occupation, were especially brutal. Can you tell us something about conditions then?

A: Conditions were worse than people think. Palestinian youths were subjected to severe beating and humiliation from the prison guards. In Asqalan Prison, for instance, where Palestinian commandos who come on patrols from abroad were being held, prisoners were always beaten and intimidated by prison guards in order to force them to call them (the guards) "my master". In Ramleh Prison, which is mainly for criminals, with some political prisoners from the Jerusalem area, conditions were much better. We did not have to bow to the guards, for instance, and were not subject to the same level of intimidation.

As for the general conditions, the health situation was far below the minimum. If a prisoner was sick, he was not properly treated. An Aspro pill was the magic pill for all diseases. There was never any other medication. We always protested, and even went on strike to get prison authorities to improve health conditions inside. We also complained to the ICRC representative about the poor medical treatment the prison authorities gave to ill prisoners.

With regard to food, the Israeli authorities discriminated against Palestinian political prisoners. Criminal prisoners, whether Arabs or Jews, received better treatment than political prisoners. They were always given better quality and larger portions of food. Criminal prisoners were also allowed to have bed sheets, pyjamas, towels, and civilian clothes, but we were not. Furthermore, they were allowed to spend more time outside their rooms than us. Their rooms in the block were kept open all afternoon and they were allowed to wander around the corridors and in the prison yards. As for us, until five years ago, we were given only one hour a day for exercise in the yard.

Q: You were released before completing your prison sentence. Can you tell us how that came about?

A: An Israeli medical committee recommended that I be released so that I could be medically treated. I became ill shortly after I was imprisoned, but I received no decent treatment until 1980 after I lost sight in my right eye. Now my left eye is threatened. I cannot see very well with it. Had the Israelis allowed me medical treatment from the beginning, I am sure my sight would not have deteriorated to this level.

I am also suffering from back pain, ulcers, hemorrhoids, and rheumatism. I sustained these diseases while in prison, and they became chronic from the lack of proper medical attention.

Q: Do other Palestinian political prisoners also suffer from chronic diseases?

A: Almost everybody suffers from one kind of disease or another. Ulcers, hemorrhoids and rheumatism are widespread among prisoners. Most prisoners also have problems with their teeth, but there is no proper treatment which preserves original teeth. If a prisoner complains from toothaches, the dentist would take out the tooth instead of treating it. As a result, most prisoners, like me, end up with dentures. In general, I can say that Palestinian political prisoners are subject to slow death process.

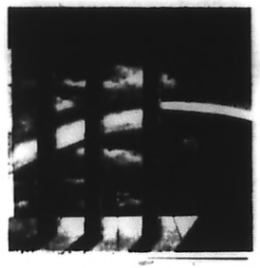
There are a number of political prisoners who suffer from various types of chronic diseases, and who require urgent medical treatment. The most serious cases, which I know of, are: Mahmoud Shihadeh, from Majd al-Krum, in the Galilee, who is suffering from severe bone disease, which doctors have treated only with painkillers. Yusef Edibi suffers from hemorrhages in the veins of the right leg. This causes swelling in his leg, and forces him to stay off his feet for a long time. Riyad al-Mala'abi, from Jerusalem, now in Asqalan Prison, suffers from a nervous disorder. Ya'coub Odeh, in Nafha Prison suffers repeated fainting spells, a result of beating on the head during interrogation. He also suffers from ulcers. Ali Qattawi, in Ramleh Prison, suffers from spinal pain.

Abadallah Ayyash, from Gaza, has been in a coma for over two years. He was recently transferred to an unknown place.

Majed Nakfory

Q: Were you subject to beating from the guards while in prison?

A: In the beginning, beating was a common practise, and we had to go on strikes and to make repeated complaints in order to put an end to these practises. I will never forget the painful corridor in Bir Sabe' prison. This was in 1981, on July 6, if I recall well. We were protesting the forced hospitalization by the prison authorities of one of our comrades, when masked border guards, all armed with tear gas guns rushed into the wards and began shooting tear gas canisters inside the rooms. Three hours later, and after we began to recover from the effects of the tear gas, Israeli officers



picked out a number of prisoners and made them walk through a long corridor, where border guards, armed with rubber truncheons stood on both sides of the corridor. As we walked through, the guards beat us with utmost brutality. I did not think that I would get out alive of that corridor. Nowadays, they occasionally take a prisoner to the solitary cells and beat him out of sight of the other prisoners.

Q: What was a 'normal' day like in prison?

A: In the morning, between 6:00 and 6:30 Israeli guards carry out the daily count of prisoners. We then do some physical exercises in the main courtyard until breakfast time. After breakfast, some prisoners go out to work on preparing lunch in the kitchen, or to wash and iron clothes, or to do other cleaning work. The rest of the prisoners who stay in the rooms usually make a full program of political and cultural discussions, reading and physical exercises. Between 8:00 and 10:00 a.m. prisoners sit on their beds reading books, newspapers or notebooks (written by other prisoners). At 10:00 a.m., we eat our breakfast, which we saved from the morning. After that prisoners have free time to play games, like chess, or discuss political and ideological issues with each other. This goes on until lunch time, where we go out to the dining room to eat.

After we return to our rooms, Israeli guards do a second count of the prisoners, after which they open the rooms for exercise. Rooms are kept open until 8:30. We do what we want, exercise, walk around, sit and read, or talk with others. Now rooms are kept opened all afternoon, but only in Ramleh Prison. In other prisons, they open the rooms for two hours a day only.

After dinner, we are given two hours, between 6:30 and 8:30 to watch television. This is usually the Israeli TV Arabic program. After closing the rooms at 8:30 p.m., and turning the lights off, some prisoners sit next to the door, where some light shines in from the hallway, to read. Before going to bed, the guards carry out the third count for the day.

Q: You said that Palestinian political prisoners had to carry out strikes in order to improve the conditions they live in. Did prisoners in Ramleh and other prisons, participate in these strikes?

A: Of course, they always do. The most important strikes we carried out, I remember, were simultaneous with the first and second Asqalan Prison strikes in 1977. The first one lasted for 45 days, and the second one, which was 20 days later, lasted 25 days. We also held a strike in solidarity with the famous Nafha Prison strike in 1980. I was then in Bir Sabe' Prison, and I remember that we refused to take any food for 13 days. All prisons participated in this strike.

Q: Can you describe how the strike started?

A: We are usually well informed about the conditions in all Israeli prisons through prisoners who are transferred from one prison to another.

When we heard about the first Asqalan Prison strike (1977), we took a decision to take part in the strike. We drafted a memorandum of our demands and took a decision, among ourselves, when to start the strike. On the specified date, we refused to go out to eat when the guard opened the door for breakfast. We told him that we were on strike and gave him the memorandum to give to the prison authorities. We also handed out to the guards all the food we had to prove to them that we were determined to maintain the strike.

We spent the strike period with political discussion, reading, and sometimes singing. From time to time, we would take a sip of water and very little salt in order to prevent dehydration.

Q: Do the authorities usually try to break strikes?

A: Always, and by different means. They usually pick some prisoners whom they regard as leaders and isolate them. They also threaten them with punishment (beating or solitary confinement for a long time) unless they stop the strike. They, however, never succeeded in breaking any strike.

Q: Do the Israelis try to weaken Palestinian prisoners' belief in their cause?

A: Yes, they do. The Israelis would use any opportunity to pressure prisoners to collaborate. If a prisoner is ill they make medical treatment conditional on 'cooperating' with them. They always offer privileges in exchange for collaboration.

In addition, they try to prevent prisoners from obtaining any political books or literature and you know, in prisons political education is very important for maintaining high morale. It is always harder to break an educated and politically aware prisoner.

Q: What benefits do political prisoners gain from prisons?

A: We call prisons revolutionary schools. I, for instance, studied Marxist philosophy, history of world revolutions and economics, in addition to reading political books in prison. Many politically aware prisoners contribute to the education of others in prison. I can say that I entered prison as a political illiterate, and left it with full consciousness.

Academically, I also benefited a lot. When I was imprisoned, I did not have a *tawjihi* degree. In fact I had finished the first preparatory class only. In prison, I studied and earned a *tawjihi* degree.

Q: Has your belief in the Palestinian cause djminished?

A: On the contrary. I am now more confident that our cause will prevail.

Q: How did you feel when you were released from prison after 17 years?

A: After the prison gates were opened in front of me, I walked several steps not believing that I was free.

I felt as if the guard was going to run after me and take me back to prison. I walked about 50 steps, each step looking back and expecting to be called to go back. I waited at the main entrance, talking to one of the guards waiting for my relatives to take me home because I did not know anything outside. I also felt as if this soldier was going to put me back in prison. It wasn't until my brothers and nephew came and took me in the car that I felt a little safe. On the way back, we stopped and my brothers took a picture of me.

When I arrived in Jerusalem, I felt like a stranger. After 17 years, everything was different. I felt like a stranger in my *homeland.*

"IT IS HARDER TO BREAK AN EDUCATED AND POLITICALLY AWARE PRISONER. WE CALL PRISONS REVOLUTIONARY SCHOOLS."

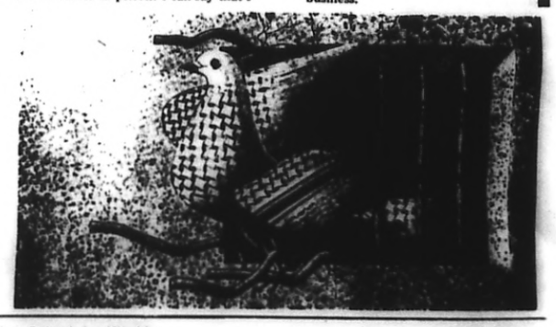
Q:What struck you as different, Israeli settlements or what?

A: Everything was different. Israeli settlements had completely changed Jerusalem . Although I used to hear a lot about Israeli settlements, I never expected Jerusalem, in which I spent all my childhood, to be so strange. Even Arab neighborhoods had changed with new construction. As I said, I just felt like a stranger.

Q: What was the first thing you did when you got back to Jerusalem?

A: I stopped at the (Jerusalem) cemetery to visit the graves of my mother and sister who died while I was serving my sentence. I also visited the grave of martyr Ishaq Maraghah, a dear friend who died while serving his sentence in Bir Sabe' Prison. I went home later to receive the many relatives and friends who came to see me. I was still feeling like a stranger in my own home.

Now I want to get proper medical treatment. This is my first order of business. ■



June Hijacking Sparks Anti-Arab Violence

by Ghassan Bishara

The June hijacking by Lebanese Shi'ites of TWA flight 847 from Athens airport to Beirut created not only a problem for Israel in terms of American public opinion, but also a wave of anti-Arab acts in America, particularly by activists of the Jewish Defense League. The anti-Arab violence in various US cities reached a climax with the placing of a bomb at the offices of the ADC in Boston, said Omar Khader, Executive Director of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), at a recent press conference.

While Americans were dissatisfied with Israel's failure to release the Lebanese prisoners they held illegally on their territory and while they expressed such dissatisfaction in various opinion polls, it should go without saying that at the same time there was increased hostility toward Arabs living in the US as a result of the hijacking. Most noticeable was "violence by a militant Jewish group in the US," said Khader. During the press conference in ADC's national office in Washington, Khader called "on federal and state law enforcement officials to protect Americans of Arab descent from acts of violence" by militant American Jewish groups. Khader's call for protection followed an incident in Boston where a bomb planted at the local offices of ADC exploded as police officers attempted to dismantle it. Two police officers were wounded. A press release distributed by ADC states that a caller, on behalf of the JDL in Boston, informed *The Boston Globe* and *The Boston Herald* newspapers of the bomb and took responsibility for it. Lincoln Millstein, city editor of *The Boston Globe*, quoted the caller as saying, "We planted a bunch of bombs in the Boston area and will continue to do so until the Arab threat ceases to exist."

At the press conference, Khader revealed that ADC's Washington offices, as well as other chapters in the US, have been receiving phone calls threatening the staff with violence and otherwise harassing them. Repetition of such calls, coupled with the violent history of the JDL, alarmed former Senator James Abourezk, ADC's national chairman. He wrote to FBI Director William Webster on April 10 of this year requesting a meeting with him to discuss the threats. "I am requesting an opportunity to meet with you to discuss the very grave concerns which my staff and I have about these politically motivated incidents," Abourezk wrote, requesting in addition that the FBI investigate these threats. In his letter to the FBI director, Abourezk cited an example of the threats. He said that one caller left a message on ADC's answering machine threatening that "...Sabra and Shatila [referring to the massacre at those two camps in late September 1982] are going to seem like nothing in comparison to what we're gonna do to you Palestinians. We're gonna throw you all into the sea. Never again." 'Never again' is known to be JDL's slogan.

Abourezk waited more than three months before receiving a letter from the FBI assistant director of the Criminal Investigative Division who expressed his concern about the harassment of Arab Americans. He informed Abourezk that steps would be taken to investigate two other previously reported incidents in New York city and Albuquerque, New Mexico. "I have instructed our New York and Albuquerque field offices to look into these allegations and determine whether or not further inquiry is warranted," the assistant director wrote. He then told Abourezk that "due to demands of Director Webster's schedule, he will be unable to meet with you in the foreseeable future." The bomb in ADC's Boston office on August 16 will undoubtedly create urgent need for a new investigation of the whole affair. This urgency resulted from the wounding of two policemen as they attempted to dismantle the bomb. Following the detonation of the device and the wounding of the two policemen, a Jewish Defense League official denied any responsibility for the bomb, despite the caller who claimed to be from the JDL. JDL's executive director, speaking on a Boston radio program, denied that his organization was responsible for the bombing, but said that his organization does not condemn acts of violence against Arabs, according to the ADC press release.

Kahane

Meir Kahane, the founder of the militant Jewish Defense League, resigned his post as JDL director in an attempt to forestall the American government's review of his American citizenship. Kahane's resignation, he says, is due to lack of time to run the organization in the US and because of a new law about to be passed in Israel which would make it illegal for members of the Knesset to hold dual citizenship. It is not clear how his resignation from the leadership of JDL, while still maintaining American citizenship, would protect him if the Israeli law is passed.

Kahane has also another problem here in the US. State Department Spokesperson Chuck Redman, answering questions on August 20 about Kahane's citizenship status in the US, said that his status is still under review. American law in the Immigration and Naturalization Act provides that "... A person who is a national of the United States ... shall lose his nationality by accepting, serving in, or performing the duties of any office, post or employment under the government of a foreign state or a political subdivision thereof, for which office, post or employment an affirmation or declaration of allegiance is required..." Being a member of the Israeli Knesset, therefore, can be grounds for review of Kahane's citizenship status in the US.

His resignation from the top post of the terrorist organization, Kahane argues, "might make it easier for me to get a visa" to enter the US once his citizenship is denied him. Kahane apparently is forecasting that the US will deny him citizenship, yet he is concerned that if he remained the JDL leader the US may not grant him entrance visas to the US. "It is important that I come back to the United States on a regular basis," he is quoted as saying in *The Washington Post* on August 20.

Kahane is presently in the US on a tour. American Jewish leaders, such as Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum, have refused to sit in the same room with Kahane and, thus, the two were interviewed separately in New York city. "It was a decision of all the major Jewish organizations affiliated with the National Jewish Committee Advisory Council, which agreed they would not legitimize Kahane's presence in this country by participating in a debate with him," wrote the *Post*.

Although he was refused legitimacy by Jewish American groups, Kahane will be received at the National Press Club (NPC), one of the most prestigious of Washington institutions. On September 12 Kahane will be the guest at that club's luncheon. Appointed to Kahane's position as the JDL leader is Irv Rubin, leader of the chapter of the Jewish Defense League of Los Angeles. The JDL claims to have up to 13,000 followers nationwide. ■

Deir Yassin

Continued from page 7

"They knifed to death the 18-year-old son of another woman in front of her eyes.

"My father's second wife, Fatmeh, claims that he was the last killed in Deir Yassin.

"On the second day, when the battle was over, the Zionists put those villagers who were still alive into trucks and sent them over the border to the Arab forces."

(Another Deir Yassin survivor living in Jerusalem says that families from the village counted the total number of inhabitants killed as 97. A Red Cross report based on the account of their representative, Jacques de Reynier, estimated that 240 were killed.

Accounts of the massacre by de Reynier, who was allowed to visit the village the day after the battle, and accounts by surviving villagers, several of whom are still in Palestine and are willing to testify, match Miriam's stories.)

After the mass expulsion, the population of Deir Yassin was dispersed to different parts of the West Bank and a few confined immediately to Amman. But as days dragged into weeks, then months, then years, more and more families who could not re-establish themselves in the West Bank moved to Jordan and some eventually to the United States. Today more than 80 percent of Deir Yassin's population lives outside Palestine. The few families who remained in Palestine live in al-Am'ari camp, Beiteen, Silwan and other villages. These families, who worked hard to establish themselves and stay in their homeland, would not hesitate for a moment to return to their village if they were allowed to.

The refrain is a familiar one, often repeated by villagers who had been expelled from their homes in 1948: "Deir Yassin was a very nice place, and I would live there even in a cave if the Israeli let me back," said Khamis Zeidan. He now works hard with the help of his 36 sons and nephews in the stone-trading business just to survive.

Available Now!

AL FAJR has prepared a comprehensive pocket diary containing local information on the WEST BANK, GAZA STRIP and PRE-1967 PALESTINE.
Such information is often difficult to find and has never before been compiled in one place.
The AL FAJR DIARY contains addresses and phone numbers of:
* LAWYERS * MUNICIPALITIES * UNIVERSITIES * PRESS * ORGANIZATIONS * INDUSTRY * ETC. IN ALL THE MAJOR CITIES
As well as HOTELS · RESTAURANTS · TRANSPORTATION in Jerusalem.

In addition the AL FAJR DIARY gives you a historical overview, information about the PLO, the major UN resolutions, maps, useful Arabic phrases, holidays and important dates AND MUCH MORE.

This compact diary (8.5 X 16 cm) is available from AL FAJR.
The AL FAJR DIARY costs only US$3 (£2) excluding postage* – US$5 (£4) including postage.
Special rates for bulk purchases.

Please send me the AL FAJR DIARY
No. of copies.....
Name.....
Address.....
Enclosed is a cheque for .....
Mail to: Al Fajr Palestinian Weekly, PO Box 19315, East Jerusalem, via Israel.

Students at Hebrew University sign petitions demanding reinstatement of Arab students expelled from Beer Sheba University.

Students protesting attacks on Haifa University Arab students.

Israeli Universities Discriminate Against Arab Students

by Awad Abdal Fatah

Since the beginning of the '84-'85 academic year, Palestinian students in the five Israeli universities have been faced with what appears to be a new campaign of forceful attacks against them by the university administrations and right-wing Jewish groups operating within the student bodies. The use of force — reported in at least five separate cases since January — has in the past characterized the official Israeli response to any form of protest by Palestinian students against discriminatory university administration policies. On several occasions, the administrations have called in the police and border guards to forcefully disperse a peaceful sit-in or demonstration. At the same time extremist Jewish students have openly threatened Arab students, while the administrations seem to turn a blind eye to such provocations.

Despite the apparent rise of such incidents, this does not mean that the use of force by Israeli authorities against Palestinian students is a new phenomenon. On the contrary, since the emergence of the Palestinian student movement in Israeli universities and the movement's adoption of the struggle for national as well as equal rights, the reaction of Israeli authorities has been "antagonistic and openly racist," according to one of the student leaders.

The students have continued to protest the racist, discriminatory policies of university administrations through demonstrations, sit-ins and the like. Among the policies under continual protest are the inequality obvious in university dissemination of financial aid — whether on a scholastic or need basis — the unavailability of dormitories, and the restricted use of university lecture halls. The students are also protesting frequent attacks by extreme right-wing student groups who have taken to using incitement against the Palestinians and demanding their total expulsion from the universities.

According to the Palestinian students, university administrators are even bowing to the pressure of such extreme groups to adopt a more hardline policy. "All the recent oppressive measures taken against Palestinian students have been coordinated by the administrations and the police, and motivated by pressure from the Israeli fascist groups," said Ali Abu Rashid, a member of the elected Arab Students Committee (ASC) at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Anwar Daoud, another committee member, explained that the newly-formed coalition between the two mainstream Palestinian political student currents in the Hebrew University, and the cooperation in other Israeli universities, "has disturbed oppressive Israeli circles." Daoud was referring to the Democratic National Alliance of the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (DFPE) and the Progressive National Movement (PNM). Both groups formed the alliance at the beginning of the academic year to work together for the general interest of Palestinian students and to combat the recent attacks against them. One student said the attacks are intended to silence Palestinian students speaking against "the injustice and grievances leveled against us as a section of the national minority."

A Series of Clashes

Over the past three months, several clashes between Palestinian students and Israeli police and border guards have occurred on the campuses of the major Israeli universities. Tens of Palestinian students have been wounded, arrested or suspended from the universities. Two students — Amir Makhoul, head of the ASC at Haifa University; and Rizek Sahouri, also a Haifa University committee member — were arrested after an incident more than two weeks ago and have been held in detention ever since. They are being held on the pretext of assaulting the police. Haifa police say the two will be kept until their trial April 14.

The severity of the situation is reflected by the fact that this case is unprecedented. It is rare to have students detained until their trial, according to one student leader, who believes "this is only revenge against the students aimed at destroying Arab student leadership."

Haifa University

At Haifa the campaign began January 10, when the university's ASC distributed a leaflet criticizing the discrimination in scholarships granted by the university and which had been distributed the day before. Many eligible Arab students did not get grants, and those who did received a much smaller amount of aid than their Jewish counterparts. When the Haifa ASC brought the case to the General Students Union for discussion, an argument broke out in which the head of the Students Union, Moshe Bassa, made anti-Arab statements and threatened the Palestinian students with ouster from the university the following term. Salah Shawahni, an ASC member, told *Al Fajr* that neither the Students Union nor the administration subsequently did anything about the issue of scholarship aid.

On February 4, three Palestinian students were brought to the Haifa University disciplinary court which ruled to suspend the three — all members of the ASC — for the rest of the year. The court took the action against the students for organizing committee elections in one of the university halls January 15 in contravention of a university rule that forbids the commitee, which is not recognized by the university, from meeting on campus. According to Shawahni, Israeli right-wing groups made threats of physical abuse against Palestinian students during the elections in the presence of security officers, but nothing was done to reprimand the provocateurs.

On January 17, a fist-fight broke out between Palestinian and extremist Jewish students during a lecture by former Chief-of-Staff Rafael Eitan at the university. According to an advertisement entitled "Black Days at Haifa University" published by the National Union of Arab students in Israel in *The Jerusalem Post* March 29, Eitan, infamous for his racist reference to Arabs as "cockroaches in a bottle," made other inflammatory statements including: "There is no room for two nations in Israel." The report says right-wing students then began to chant "Arabs out." After Palestinian and other Jewish students protested, the university dean, Gabi Malka, said student leader Amir Makhoul would be disciplined. Several students left the hall in protest. Security forces then blocked the exit and apparently allowed extremist Jewish students to beat up the protesting Palestinians. A fight ensued and three Palestinians were injured, including Shahira Daoud, who had to be hospitalized after she was beaten unconscious.

Committee leader Ja'afar Farah told *Al Fajr* that the ASC had asked Dean Malka not to allow Eitan to deliver his lecture because of his well-known racist attitude toward Arabs. Their request was ignored. After the fight at Eitan's lecture, Makhoul and Farah were both expelled from study — Makhoul for two terms and Farah for one — and three others were placed on

Continued on page 14

Palestinian prisoners in south Lebanon, 1982./Esaias Baitel Photo.

At Ansar and Mar Elias

Palestinians Recount Torture, Humiliating Treatment

The following two documents on conditions in Israeli-run POW camps in south Lebanon were circulated by the Paris-based human rights organization, "The International Center for Information on Palestinian and Lebanese Prisoners, Deportees and Missing Persons."

One Day in Ansar Camp: Letter from Prisoner Sheikh Yousef Muslimani

Last October 24, [1984], on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Lebanese Communist Party, at precisely 2:00 pm, political meetings began in the eight detention units of the Ansar concentration camp in south Lebanon, with speeches in the name of the "National Democratic Front," the Amal movement, the Palestinian resistance, the LCP and the Committee for the Rights of Ansar Prisoners (Khalid Rihani).

But the occasion did not pass off without incident.

Sheikh Muslimani, a prisoner at Ansar, related the events of that day in a letter addressed to Mustafa Sa'ad, leader of the popular Nasserist movement in Sidon.

"I would like to tell you about what happened during the day of October 24, 1984, on the 60th anniversary of the Lebanese Communist Party. It was on a Wednesday, at precisely 2:05 pm, that an Israeli officer approached us and ordered us to take down a poster on which was written "Towards the building of the unified Arab Communist Party," as well as a red flag planted on the platform which had been prepared for the meeting.

"Naturally, the response was that nothing could be done until the festivities were over, and that these problems had nothing to do with the state of Israel. He insisted we should take them down and we insisted on keeping them up. He went away furious.

"I asked my brothers and comrades then to start the meeting. Several short speeches were made. I myself was making a speech for the national Islamic resistance when the camp's commanding officer arrived with more than 350 soldiers who surrounded our unit.

"It was fantastic. Not one of us moved. I continued to speak, the others to listen. The camp's commanding officer came towards me and fired several tear gas grenades. Shots rang out on all sides to force us to scatter. They got what they wanted, because the gases were unbearable. But it was then that everyone stood up – Muslims, Nasserists, Palestinian and Lebanese Communists, Sunnis and Shi'ites, all together – and we launched our counter-offensive, forcing the enemy to draw back from the area of our camp 201.

"The position of our brothers in camp 206 was extraordinary. The prisoners from Sidon threw everything at hand on the enemy. Even a radio, a broom, a refuse bucket... They really demonstrated that they were worthy of belonging to our great town. Their fate was the same as ours, of course, with the most terrible gases. But I must say that it really was a great honour for us, to achieve this solidarity with all decent people.

"Despite all this, we asked our brothers in camps 201 and 206 to continue the celebrations. We achieved this, despite four attacks by the enemy, all of which ended in failure.

"I can say frankly that the enemy was terrorised and shocked. They were astonished and surprised by our tenacity.

"Really our position was fantastic, as everyone stood up to repeat after me 'Prisoners of Ansar, Unite!'...

"My brother, Abu Maarouf, the enemy, as you know, was not content with that but came back the next day, Thursday, October 25, and surrounded camps 201 and 206. They took us out and began searches. They took away all the hand objects we had made. Then they sent almost everyone else back into the camp. They tried to take me away into solitary confinement but our brothers stopped them. I was finally transferred from camp 201 to another... Now, the intelligence services are trying by every means possible to break up the Committee for the Defence of Prisoners' Rights. Those who are there now number 1018, including 36 soldiers from the Lebanese police force and army.

On behalf of the prisoners:
Sheikh Yousef Muslimani

(This letter has been reproduced from the bulletin *Lebanon in Conflict*, December 1984).

Testimony of Ahmad Salem, Held at Mar Elias and Ansar

On May 19, 1984, I was made to give myself up to the "National Guard," after the occupying forces had taken my younger brother hostage and had threatened to arrest my mother and my other young brother if I did not give myself up. My younger brother who had been arrested suffered from asthma, had very poor eyesight and was very weak. My mother was very worried about him. I was all the more surprised by such a procedure because I was not involved in any activity which could justify arrest, or even a summons for interrogation. But it is true that after each operation against them, the occupying forces go crazy and carry out arbitrary arrests, particularly amongst young people.

The same day (May 19, 1984) I was transferred to the Mar Elias prison (in the Eastern suburb of Sidon). I was handcuffed and a hood was put over my head. They wanted to impress me by making me believe that they knew everything about me; then I was taken into the interrogation room. An Israeli colonel, whom they called Abu Said, then took off my hood shouting out my name, after having talked in Hebrew to Abu Nour (who had put the hood on). The interrogation lasted for more than six hours and each subsequent one (there were 12) lasted longer. Each time they alternated violent methods (threats, tortures) and gentle ones (encouragement, offers of money). What they did to me is typical of what they do to all detainees:

1. They beat me with rods and rubber (tubing) (as well as punching and kicking me) on the genitals in a way I cannot describe here.

2. They pulled out the hairs of my beard and threw me against the wall or floor; or threw me on the floor and stood stamping on me.

3. They hurled all sorts of insults and abuse at me and spat in my face to humiliate me.

4. They threatened to rape the women in my family.

5. They threatened to harm my relations and friends.

6. They handcuffed me and left me with the hood on my head for several days in the burning sun; or forced me to sit on stones; or exposed me at night to very cold weather.

7. Access to the toilets and drinking water was left up to the guard's "good will."

8. They prevented us from sleeping at night by drenching us with water, throwing stones at us and calling out to us non-stop. When I did manage to sleep on the stones, I was disturbed several times during the night.

9. They always led us to believe that colleagues had confessed or else had given us away.

10. The worst thing was that they used illnesses (which no prisoner held in such conditions could help getting) to make us collaborate with them. Money or our freedom was offered to us if we would collaborate with them.

11. I was left shut in the toilets (a hole in the ground with no drains) for a long time, especially before and after the interrogations. At the same time, the door of the toilets was left open when we wanted to use them.

At the Mar Elias camp We were shut up in two sorts of cells:

1. Small cells, where light entered only through two small openings the size of the palm of the hand, where air, because of this, could not circulate. The surface area was one-and-a-half square metres. One person could sleep on the bare ground. But sometimes there were three of us in the cell, we could not move, let alone sleep;

2. Containers, where 13 people slept on two mattresses. It was very cold during the night (with the moisture of the dew and the rain as well) and very hot during the day under the glaring sun. Blankets were very rare. The containers should not have held more than five people, but usually we were 15 and sometimes more. We had to put up with the moods of our soldier guards who took it out on us each time something happened. And when the guards were relieved by the so-called "Golani" forces, we were all made to leave our cells and were left directly under the sun for more than 36 hours, without eating or drinking, with the threat that dogs might be let loose on us. We could not go to the toilets. After that, for a week the soldiers didn't stop hitting us when one of us made the slightest move.

All the food we got was a small piece of bread, an egg, a scrap of tomato for two people and rotten tins of food. According to the whims of our guards we might or might not get drinking water, stale bread...

Continued on page 14

ICJ Report:

Fara'a Center 'Confession Factory'

For the past two years, the West Bank affiliate of the prestigious, Geneva-based International Commission of Jurists has been gathering testimonies from former detainees about the conditions and treatment they experienced at Fara'a Detention Center. The ICJ published some of the affidavits taken by the Ramallah human rights organization, Law in the Service of Man, in a report unequivocally entitled: *Torture and Intimidation in the West Bank: The Case of al-Fara'a Prison.*

The 56-page booklet defines a concerted Israeli policy of *tertur*, Israeli army slang for semi-torture or degrading exercises directed toward the general population in the form of arbitrary round-ups, arrests and rearrests, but particularly against detainees. Fara'a, a former British Mandate and Jordanian stable and army camp northeast of Nablus, was converted into a detention camp for youth by Israeli occupation authorities following the mass uprising in spring 1982. The bulk of the detainees are between 15 and 25 years old.

At first Fara'a specialized in the detention without trial of Palestinian teenagers. As the testimonies taken by LSM reveal, the function of the camp changed in the fall of 1983 from a pre-trial detention center to an interrogation and intimidation center where false confessions were wrung out of the youths by a variety of physical and psychological torture methods.

The "facility" at Fara'a is the only prison for Palestinians that is run by the Israeli army rather than the Israeli prison authorities. In this aspect it bears more resemblance to Ansar and to other military Israeli prisons in south Lebanon than to prisons in the occupied territories. Officially it is called Fara'a Correction Center — an innocuous name for what is really a "confessions factory," as both LSM and the League for Human and Civil Rights in Israel have termed it. As the ICJ-LSM report says:

"The outstanding feature at al-Fara'a... is that confessions are manufactured. The evidence demonstrates that al-Fara'a is intended to operate as an intimidation center to which groups — mainly of young people — are taken for a certain period, given harsh treatment and later tried on the basis of confessions that appear in many cases to be extracted against their will, then released."

The report documents that detainees at Fara'a are tortured. But, as the ICJ's preface intones, it is not enough to demand better treatment for detainees. The intended function of the center itself is what violates basic human rights. (Parallel is the severity of occupation policy — to control the population by such collective measures as "curfews, house demolitions and the withdrawal of basic services from whole neighborhoods" — which cannot be "reformed" without abolishing occupation itself.)

The report is divided into four sections. The first, containing a dozen affidavits, describes specific instances of the routine arrest and interrogation procedures used until 1983; the second elaborates on beatings during interrogation used from December 1983 until now; the third details cases where medical treatment was withheld to force confessions; and the fourth documents how detainees were ill-treated following complaints to the Red Cross.

None of the affiants presented in the first section of the report were questioned on a specific charge or even brought to trial. While this represents a minor policy change after December 1983, the report stresses that "detainees are... interrogated on a number of events... aimed at procuring a confession [about one]."

The physical conditions at Fara'a provide a grim backdrop for the degrading forms of treatment and say a lot about the intention of the military authorities:

A) *The "rooms"* — 20 square meter rooms holding up to 30 prisoners, no toilets.

B) *The "stables"* — from two to five detainees are kept in a single horse pen, up to 60 prisoners in all, without toilets or running water.

C) *The "tents"* — 18 square meter tents erected for up to 50 prisoners during periods of widespread demonstrations.

No semblance of personal hygiene is possible under the circumstances, without water or toilet facilities. To contribute to the animal-like treatment accorded prisoners, food is rotten and spoiled, heads are forcibly shaved and punishment often means being forced to sit in sewage water, doused with buckets of urine, stripped naked and tied to poles, kept outside all night in the cold, forced to crawl, bark like a dog, slap fellow prisoners and masturbate before soldiers. Camp "rules" are imposed for soldiers' amusement such as jumping up and not speaking in the presence of soldiers and keeping hands behind one's back at all time.

The torture described by these former detainees has shocked many West Bank Palestinians because of its aimless brutality: detainees are kept for long periods hooded and handcuffed (in various positions, but often arms to opposite legs in a painful human X), beaten with fists and gun butts, whipped with broomsticks and electric cables, kicked with steel-capped boots, deprived of food and sleep, dragged by the shoulders, suffocated, squeezed by the fingers and burned with live cigarettes.

The intimidation process at Fara'a is topped off by tactics to induce psychological and mental exhaustion of detainees. The young men are invariably taken without warning from their family homes late at night by groups of 10 to 20 soldiers and police. On many occasions soldiers forcefully enter the houses, conducting searches without warrants, seizing books and posters, verbally abusing family members — in every way creating an atmosphere of fear and terror.

The trip to Fara'a is made as uncomfortable as possible. The detainees — all young men — are blindfolded with *hattahs* or their jackets, handcuffed, seated on the floor and taken on dizzyingly long routes without explanation. Detainees recounted how the driver of the jeep would stop abruptly, for no other reason than to jostle the handcuffed youths. Soldiers also pass the time by kicking their hooded captives.

Detainees' requests to see a lawyer, doctor or Red Cross official are promised but always denied. The youths have no idea what charges, if any, are to be brought against them and are not informed of their own court hearings until they are taken to the courtroom.

Questioning of detainees was either on irrelevant subjects (like the assassinations of Sadat and Bashir Gemayel), on general activities (student council programs), on vague, insupportable charges ("inciting," "throwing stones," "demonstrating") or non-existent ones. On several occasions, detainees recounted, interrogators crossed out words of denial in statements they had already signed. Thus, "I did not throw stones" was altered to become "I did throw stones."

A 19-year-old student from Nablus who was arrested a dozen times without interrogation and who spent 134 days in Fara'a between March 1982 and December 1983 said of his torture: "I was in such a state that I just couldn't take the pain, and I confessed to something I hadn't done." ■

Benvenisti:

Continued from page 4

living.' This is true but only on the personal level. People say: 'What's the matter? We confiscate only uncultivated lands.' This is true but who said they cannot be cultivated?

Q. What is the political impact of your research?

Benvenisti: My approach isn't political. I try to explain a given situation and to shake some people from their dreams. There has been no effort in the dovish camp according to the changing reality, therefore we are dragging behind the events. The dovish camp is making wrong calculations in saying on the (West) Bank there are 700,000 Arabs and 30,000 Jews, therefore there is no problem with annexation. But in the Galilee before Judaisation no one thought like that. It should be remembered that the potential of the (West) Bank is much bigger. It is close to the suburbs of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

The political impact is that if the facts that I describe are correct then we should think how we shall compete with them. It is much simpler to demonstrate and say we are for self-determination for the Palestinians because at the moment you say this, you are relaxed and you feel you have done your task. If my view is right, then action should be taken tomorrow: for example, to say that we, members of the Labour Party caucus in the Knesset, demand that every order of the military governor should pass through the committee of foreign and defence affairs. But they will not do this; it would be interpreted as annexation and this is a paradox. Therefore there are no social benefits for Arab workers because if there were, it would be interpreted as *Histadrut* support for annexation. So we reach increasing numbers of paradoxes as the system becomes established.

On the Basis of Facts

I remember a dispute in *HaShomer HaZa'ir* (Mapam movement) whether to establish a youth club in Ariel. What is the *HaShomer HaZa'ir* intending to do? To turn all these people into isolates? What will it do when 4000 families are living in Ma'aleh Adumim? It will not open a youth club? Why? Because it is beyond the 'green line'? Then does it want all of them to go right away to the hands of Betar (Likud youth organisation)?

I don't say that the conclusion is that the (West) Bank should be annexed but there should be a clear resolution of what is being done because *de facto* annexation exists already. And the (Zionist — tr.) left refuses to accept this. They claim I'm promoting despair.

The problem will not be solved if Labour comes back to power because the problem is not focussed in a territorial compromise. This problem is that the speed of construction in the suburbs of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv (within the boundaries of the (West) Bank) will continue in any case. There will be no revolutions and anyone who expects a revolution loses costly time; there is a young generation growing up here that considers the present situation as normal. It is not enough to speak about the corrupting occupation. This generation wants to know more than that.

Q: You have succeeded in making the doves angry.

Benvenisti: I know this makes them angry. Last week they didn't want me to lecture in the Labour caucus forum in the Knesset. Mapam members also objected. They said I was a propagandist of the Likud and I could lecture in that forum only if I used it as a tool to return to good manners. Peace Now is also angry at me but I'm prepared to debate only on the basis of facts and situation evaluations. The research was done in a most detailed manner and I would be glad if people would come to see the maps but no one has come.

Q: However, you don't present solutions.

Benvenisti: I have no solutions and because of this they attack me. However, I'm not working in the political field. I have a claim both against the hawks and the doves. From the hawks I want an answer to the question: 'what will you do with the values of a nation-state that you have destroyed?' To the doves I say: 'You have fought against this because you wanted to keep Israel as a nation-state, democratic-socialist, and you have lost. How then do you compete with this situation?' These questions should be asked now. All are busy with theoretical questions: 'What will happen if the (West) Bank will be annexed?' They should think that this has been done already and then all the questions turn into immediate dilemmas. (Translation: Al Hamishmar, February 10, 1984).

Ansar

Continued from page 12

After the interrogations we were completely forgotten. If a doctor came to see us, his remedy — whatever our illness — was to advise us to drink water. So I was constipated for more than 13 days. I had dizzy spells and was very weak. The officers in charge of the investigation deliberately behaved as though they knew nothing about us for long periods. Thus we spent long months not knowing what the Israeli soldiers wanted from us. We always stayed on our guard, our nerves stretched to the breaking point by the cries or groans of the other prisoners.

On June 21, 1984, I was transferred to Ansar until July 16, 1984. I was left in one of the cells situated at the entrance to the camp. These cells, two-and-a-half by two meters in size, could contain up to 13 people. We had three covers and no mattresses. We were not allowed to talk amongst ourselves, to call the guard... Sometimes the guard would enter suddenly, then we would have to put our hands on our heads and turn to face the wall. Then he would begin to beat us. Some of us fell ill in this way. One day a doctor came, and again he advised us to drink water. He gave me an aspirin for all my sufferings. He made us clean the Israeli soldiers' canteen while we were kicked or struck with rifle butts or iron bars. It was very hot in the cells. When we wanted to go to the lavatory, there was a bucket which could only be emptied once a day. The stench and the germs spread. We had only one small gallon of water to drink and to wash in. At any rate, we were forbidden to clean ourselves like in the Mar Elias camp.

On the day of my transfer to one of these camps we were brought out of the cells, our clothes were removed and we were left naked, in a line, for a long time. Then they brought special clothes (brown for me — to go to, according to their name, the "recalcitrants' camp"), underwear and kitchen utensils.

Prisoners at Ansar behind barbed wire.

The camp to which I was taken (C4) was surrounded by a concrete wall, in contrast to the other camps which were only surrounded by barbed wire. (In camp B there are eight camps and in camp C there are six. Each camp is made up of nine tents, one for the kitchen, one for prayer and seven others for sleeping. In each camp there are about 125-150 people; each tent houses about 20 people).

Every morning there was a roll call. The Israeli soldiers asked us to line up in rows of 10 with our backs to them. They would come up behind us. We got the impression that they were very much afraid of us. They were very nervous and worried by the idea that one of us might escape. (By the way, we used this fear to get some small improvements in the camp).

For food, we had just about enough to keep us alive: two eggs a week, one apple for six people, one jar of jam for six people a week, a bit of bread a day; sometimes a potato, milk and hardly any sugar. We had tea twice a day, after breakfast and supper. After several revolts and after making life difficult for the occupying forces, we were able to get parcels from relatives (200 grams of coffee, tea or cocoa, one half kilogram of sweets, underwear, sports shoes, a comb, a book, a packet of cigarettes).

At each uprising and movement in the camp, the Israeli soldiers would spray us with gas which made us dizzy and caused us to vomit, and some of us were sent to the cells or the interrogation rooms.

Some of us were ill (Ali Ghanem, for example, who had heart problems, and Mohammed Ghazel and Hassan Kawasarani, who were chronically depressed: Kawasarani had also lost both his feet — he has just been released after more than four months of detention). I myself suffer from a sort of eye infection. Before my arrest I was receiving treatment. Since then this infection worsened. The Israeli soldiers paid no attention to my state of health. They even broke my glasses and did not pass on the medicine that my mother sent me through the ICRC.

Rumors were circulating that the only medicine the Israeli soldiers gave to the prisoners would make us sterile...

About our internal organization, each camp had its *chaouish* elected by the prisoners, as well as an "inner" committee also chosen by the prisoners. There was one *mukhtar* for the whole camp. There was also just one "outer" committee for the whole camp, made up of five members representing all the different political tendencies. This committee met the ICRC each week, even if the latter only entered the camp once a month. It was also this committee that was in contact with the Israeli authorities. Few of our demands were met, however.

On the day I was freed, 15 of us were taken in a lorry to Nabatyad (the *Regie*). Throughout the journey we were continually kicked by the Israeli soldiers. I myself was taken to the Mar Elias camp. There, I was taken before a certain "Abu Samir" (Israeli intelligence officer) who said that I was as good as dead, that I must leave the south. He handed me over to local officials who took me to Batar the next day (without even giving me time to greet my family).

(Testimony of Ahmad Salem, imprisoned at Mar Elias (Sidon) and then at Ansar from May 19 to October 15, 1984, given at a press conference organized in Beirut by the Islamic Committee of Ansar Detainees, October 29, 1984.)

The Israeli spokesperson denied the allegations that torture was practised in the Israeli detention camps. The Islamic committee responded to this declaration. Soon after, the Israeli authorities expelled Ahmad Salem's mother (55 years old) as well as his younger brothers, from the south, to pay him back for holding the press conference. (Ahmad Salem, a Palestinian, lived with his family in Sidon). ■

Students

Continued from page 11

probation. A right-wing Israeli student was also suspended for one term, an action Palestinian students claim was mere "symmetry" to satisfy public opinion.

In protest against the expulsion and probation decisions, a number of demonstrations and sits-in were organized on the campus. On March 10, the committee organized a peaceful strike and sit-in for two hours in a corner of the campus main building. According to the National Union of Arab Students' published statement: "It was the midday break. Pedestrian passage was not hindered. No incidents occurred. But to the university authorities it was an illegal gathering." After the students refused to disperse and return to classes, Dean Malka called the police who came armed with clubs and tear gas. The police interference quickly sparked a violent clash between police and students in which 15 students were wounded. Three of these were hospitalized for head injuries. In addition, 10 students — including Makhoul and Sahouri, as mentioned before — and two employees of *Al Ittihad* newspaper — Ali Nassar, a reporter, and Gideon Gitai, a photographer, were arrested. Eight of the 10 students and the two journalists were later released after several days in detention. Makhoul and Sahouri continue to be detained, awaiting trial on a charge of attacking the police.

Despite this harassment, the Palestinian students at Haifa University have not given in. They continue to organize sit-ins almost daily on campus to protest the continued detention of the two and the suspension of others.

Hebrew University

The situation of Palestinian students at Hebrew University in Jerusalem is no different from that in Haifa. The university administration's adoption of the 'iron fist' policy has been seen in a number of similar incidents there this year.

On February 20, despite repeated protests to the dean of students from the Hebrew University ASC, the local representative of the Lebanese National Forces, Pierre Yazbek, was allowed to deliver a lecture at the university. The lecture was sponsored by Gilad, a right-wing student group affiliated with the Israeli Likud and Tehiya parties. ASC objected to the speaker because "he (Yazbek) is a fascist, and a partner to the Sabra and Shatila massacre," according to Victor Khouri, an ASC member. Committee member Anwar Daoud agreed, adding, "There is no difference between the fascism of Kahane and that of Pierre Yazbek."

Before the lecture began, a fist-fight occurred between the Palestinian students and Gilad members. The Arab students then refused to leave the hall until Yazbek himself left. As a result of the incident nine Palestinian students were brought before the university disciplinary court. All nine, five of whom are ASC members and representatives of the regional union of Arab students, were placed on probation.

A week later on February 28, the police and border guards stormed campus and forcefully dispersed a demonstration organized by Palestinian and Jewish students in protest of another proposed visit, this time by the racist Knesset member Meir Kahane. Eight students were injured and fifteen placed in detention for several hours.

In response to the police action, the ASC organized a sit-in a few days after the Kahane visit in front of the dean's office. The students demanded he cancel an agreement between the police and the university administration permitting the police to enter campus at any time without a permit. The dean reacted to the sit-in by suspending two student leaders, Daoud and Ahmad Nazzal, for one year.

Angered by the suspensions, the ASC called another demonstration on campus in which they demanded the cancellation of the suspensions as well as the revocation of the police agreement. "Instead of inviting the student representatives to negotiate with him," explained Daoud, "the dean of students called the police to the scene, but fortunately the demonstration had already ended."

On March 14, the Palestinian students again protested and declared a general strike and sit-in in front of the dean's office. The dean was then forced to negotiate with the Arab student representatives and to reach an agreement in which suspension orders against the two students were cancelled. Eight students will continue to be on probation, and one will receive a reprimand. In the agreement the university agreed to appeal a qualifying statement to the disciplinary court's written decision saying that by recognizing the charge sheet against them, were negating their stand against Yazbek or Kahane and that they could continue to object to their presence on campus.

Although a considerable number of the Palestinian students considered the agreement humiliating, the student negotiators believe it is a major achievement and the best agreement they could reach. One of the students told *Al Fajr* the negotiators should not have accepted the agreement, but continued to struggle, making no concessions for the benefit of the university administration. Daoud, a member of the student negotiating team, disagreed. He told *Al Fajr*: "We view this agreement as an achievement because we succeeded in forcing the dean to cancel disciplinary trials for 14 students." He added that the trials could mean suspension or other punitive measures.

Palestinian students at Israeli universities view this antagonistic campaign on the part of university administrations as akin to the general policy followed by other Israeli institutions against the Palestinian people. They believe they still have a long way to go before realizing their basic student and national rights. Their relationship with the university administrations is part of this larger conflict. Compromises which are reached from time to time between the two sides — students and administrations — or the relative peace which may prevail on the campuses at times, is apparently only the calm before the storm when the conflict is resumed in its various forms. ■

Karim Khalaf

Continued from page 5

question Khalaf and the other two mayors who were car-bomb targets. For four years, no serious attempt was made to get to the bottom of these attacks, all levied against the leading figures on the National Guidance Committee (an institution which, by their own testimony, high officials of the Israeli military administration in the West Bank were anxious to eradicate). It later turned out that the underground had targeted a total of six leaders of the National Guidance Committee, and that senior members of the military administration and the Gush Emunim movement were fully involved in the plot. It was only four years later — when the underground took it upon itself to set bombs on six Arab buses that could have killed hundreds of people — that officials finally decided to act. Their efficient round-up of some 20-odd prominent figures made it clear that they must have had some information at their disposal all along which they chose not to act upon.

***

While all of Ramallah was under curfew, friends of Zalman Abulnik were permitted to sit in the deserted marketplace under military guard for a week on a vigil of mourning. Except for Israeli patrols, they were the only people allowed on the streets. Hence the government made an exceptional gesture and effort to enable these Jews to express their bereavement and anger over the death of their comrade and friend.

No such exception was made for friends and mourners of Karim Khalaf, Ramallah's mayor for 10 years, whose death was certain to affect tens of thousands of Palestinians in a personal and direct way. Karim Khalaf was a national leader, and the population he had served for so many years wanted to pay him their last respects. His family wanted him to have a dignified and proper funeral, so they scheduled it for Wednesday, April 3 at 2:00 pm — the hour the military spokesperson had repeatedly announced the curfew on Ramallah and al-Bireh would be lifted. But the curfew was maintained in contravention of the army's promise. Moreover, the Israelis went to other extraordinary lengths to curtail attendance at Khalaf's funeral. They set up roadblocks miles away from Ramallah and turned back many people in the funeral procession on its way home from Jerusalem's Maqassed Hospital; they cordoned off the church where the funeral service was to be held; and they patrolled the city streets all morning, announcing over loudspeakers that anyone violating the curfew that day would "endanger himself."

Why should one group of mourners merit exceptional accommodation, while another is subject to exceptional restriction? Is one death more worthy of bereavement than another?

Was a population prevented from mourning one of its leaders because one individual killed a Jewish settler? Or was the opportunity to curtail massive expression of grief and solidarity conveniently exploited? In either case, and as is so often the case with Palestinian funerals here, the right to mourn was unquestionably abused.

All in all, the Israeli attitude towards the death of Karim Khalaf may perhaps be best illustrated by the way the Israel TV reporter opened his coverage of Karim Khalaf's funeral: "Another nail in the coffin of the National Guidance Committee," he announced — with a trace of smug satisfaction that truly bordered on the grotesque.

By contrast, when Abulnik was killed, the settlers and the Israeli public demanded wide-scale revenge and further collective punishment in the form of closing Palestinian universities and establishing new settlements. "Jews must be able to walk freely everywhere in *Eretz Israel* and feel secure that no harm will befall them," the settlers insisted arrogantly after Abulnik's death. They feel they have the right to move freely without being afraid, yet they also give themselves license to curtail the mobility of an entire population at every turn through roadblocks, town arrests, permits, curfews, deportations, detentions, and even violence. The late Mayor Khalaf, for one, crippled by a car-bomb and exiled to Jericho for two years, was by no means free to walk in every part of his homeland.

***

The Israeli government, the Jewish settlers in the West Bank and Gaza, the military administration, and the Israeli public should come to grips with reality. One cannot impose a military occupation on a people, take its land, and threaten to expel it — and expect that population to preserve the peace. If Israelis wish their own lives to be considered valuable by the Arab population, and if they wish to prevent future political killings, the way is not through curfews, collective punishment, control, military rule and suppression of an entire population to the sole benefit of another. The way to achieve such a goal is, first and foremost, by dropping the hypocrisy of the double standard that raises the life of one man to such a higher value than that of another. If Israelis would value others' lives, freedom, and independence in equal measure with their own, chances are that others would be more likely to do the same for them.

Kate Rouhana is a member of Al *staff*

Palestinian Supporters in New Zealand

Human rights are dear to the hearts of all honorable people. In Auckland, New Zealand, the Palestine Human Rights Campaign held a demonstration outside the grounds of the World Cup series pitting New Zealand against an Israeli team. Placards condemning Israel as a racist state and condemning its suppression of Palestinian rights and culture were held aloft by the Auckland demonstrators October 26.

A poster published for the occasion listed some of the Israeli practices against the Palestinian people under occupation such as the demolition of family homes, the destruction of entire Palestinian villages, house arrests, travel restrictions, discrimination against Arab workers, torture, humiliation, and detention without charge or trial. "Israel versus Palestine, what's the real score?" read the poster.

Jericho House Destroyed

Jericho military authorities demolished a newly-constructed house January 17 belonging to 'Ujah resident Nofan Yusef on the pretext that the area was closed for military reasons. Yusef had earlier obtained the appropriate building permits from the military and civilian authorities in Jericho. He now fears that his 12-dunum plot will also be confiscated. The 'Ujah area outside Jericho in the Jordan Valley has had long experience with land confiscation for Israeli military purposes.

Yusef told *Al Fajr* that he had spent 11 months preparing for the construction of his house and consulted with several Israeli departments, including planning, absentee property and archaeology. He obtained all necessary papers and was then referred to the military authorities for final approval. The military governor referred him to the 'civil administrator,' who in turn sent him back to the military governor. He was finally told that the area in which his 12 dunums lay had been designated a closed military area. Yusef was not deterred. Believing that he had all the necessary papers, he constructed his new house.

One year and JD12,000 later, a military bulldozer appeared without warning and demolished the completed six-bedroom house.

Yusef, a taxi driver, said he would consult a lawyer but felt despair because he had spent all his life savings on the house. He also fears total military confiscation of his land.

Ramallah advocate Raja Shehadeh told *Al Fajr* that Yusef has clearly been victimized by the military authorities and that he believes Yusef should demand compensation in a military court since he had obtained a building permit.

Abd al-Qader Husseini Remembered

The leader of Palestinian resistance forces in the 1930's and 1940's, Abd al-Qader Husseini, was honoured in the first Martyr's Day rally in the Triangle village of Taibeh to mark the 37th anniversary of his death, April 8. Husseini was killed defending the village of Qastel against Zionist forces.

The 200 Palestinians who attended the Taibeh rally, sponsored by al-Nahda movement, called for the day to be commemorated annually for other martyrs. Delegations and personalities came from all over Palestine, specifically Jerusalem, Nazareth, Kufr Qassem, Hebron, Bir Zeit, Nablus and a number of villages in the Galilee Triangle.

Members of al-Nahda movement visited Jerusalem on the morning of April 8 and laid a wreath in honour of Husseini at the monument of the unknown soldier near the Palestine Musuem.

Among the participants in the Taibeh rally was the young grandson of the Palestinian leader who read a poem. Abd al-Qader's son, Faisal Husseini, head of the Arab Studies Center in Jerusalem, was forbidden to attend because of a five-year-old town arrest order restricting him to the city limits.

Other participants included: Nazareth poet Jamal Qa'war; writer Issam Abbassi from the Arab Studies Center; Fayez Qawasmeh, brother of Hebron mayor Fahd Qawasmeh who was killed in Amman last December; Marwan Barghouti, head of the Bir Zeit Students Council; and representatives of al-Nahda movement in Taibeh and Baqa al-Gharbiya. Abd al-Aziz Abu Usba' was the master of ceremonies.

Speakers in the two-hour rally focused on support for the PLO and the call for Palestinian unity, especially across artificial borders such as the (1967) 'green line' or (Israeli army) red line, used to separate Palestinians from each other.

At the end of the rally a follow-up committee was announced to arrange activities for yearly festivals. Issam Abbasi told Al Fajr that the committee plans to collect information on Palestinian martyrs for future festivals and possibly to publish a book or a series on Palestinians who sacrificed their lives for the Palestinian cause.

Yatta Shepherds Lose Valuable Pastures

The village of Yatta near Hebron.

by Awad Abdel Fattah

For many years the people of Yatta have relied totally on livestock and farming as their primary source of subsistence. Over the years, at the beginning of every winter, everyone in the village except the elderly and children in school, collect their belongings and lead their sheep to winter havens in a warmer area called *al-Masfara*, 15 kilometers to the south. There lies Yatta's winter village, named *Kherba*, consisting of a widely scattered group of caves made relatively comfortable for the winter stay with belongings brought from home.

No doubt that for modern man, this sounds much like the Middle Ages, but for these villagers this winter sojourn with their sheep is a necessary part of their livelihood. They have managed to sprinkle traditional life with the flavor of more modern conveniences. Cars and televisions run by batteries can be found there in winter, so that though they may look it, they are not isolated from the world. Kherba in the summer is an arid desert without life, but in winter the grass and crops grow quickly and very tall. In this area many generations of the 2500-strong Yatta, about 20 kilometers south of Hebron, have lived and tended their sheep. But the Israeli military has changed all that.

"THE ISRAELIS CARRIED OUT THIS CRIME, WITHOUT PREVIOUS WARNING, SO THAT PART OF OUR BELONGINGS REMAINED INSIDE, INCLUDING EXPENSIVE FODDER FOR THE SHEEP."

Kherba Destroyed

Last May, the hundreds of years of winter grazing in al-Masfara were wiped out in only three days. Israeli bulldozers destroyed the Kherbas caves burying the rain-fed wells beneath the broken stone and forcing Yatta villagers out. This was done under the pretext of using the area for military maneuvers. The destruction of the approximately 500 caves was "very quick and savage," said Jibrin al-Jundi, one of the *mukhtars* of the village. Pointing to his destroyed cave through a hole where his bed and some of his remaining utensils could still be seen, he said, "The Israelis carried out this crime, without previous warning, so that part of our belongings remained inside, including expensive fodder for the sheep."

The area was then declared a closed zone by the Israeli occupation authorities. The villagers were then notified that they could no longer use the land.

October is the month the villagers lead their sheep to winter pasture. The *mukhtar* said that the villagers would now be at the Kherba if it had not been destroyed. Instead they await with hope a change in the position of the Israeli military governor to whom the landowners have appealed a number of times since their evacuation.

Ibrahim al-Jundi, another landowner, said that the villagers still have Turkish land deeds, and that the Israelis have no right to take over the land. "As far as we believe," he said, "the law does not allow the transformation of agricultural land to a military area."

However, the villagers don't believe that the purpose of the confiscation is military. They say that it is merely a cover for their aim to transfer the land from Arab ownership to Jewish hands. Yatta's fear for its land began in 1980 when the first Israeli settlement in their area was established, effectively controlling hundreds of dunums of agricultural and grazing areas in the village. Since then three more settlements have been built. Apparently the location of the settlements was purposely chosen to separate the villagers from their grazing land. They stand on the mountain range separating Yatta from al-Masfara where the winter village lies. "The Israelis," said Khalil Yunis, a school principal, "have been preparing for this for a long time and they built such a strip of settlements to also affect us psychologically." He said the Israelis probably expected the landowners to abandon their land voluntarily. However, this land is the most fertile in Palestine, he said, and the Israelis have had an eye on it for a long time.

Challenge

The landowners haven't given in so easily to the military court. The few families who were still there when the Israelis carried out the demolition, refused to leave their caves. The Israelis then came back a few days later, when they were in Yatta, and bulldozed the remaining caves.

The population decided to defy the order, by leading their sheep to the closed area, because they believed a great injustice had been done to them. But Israeli soldiers came in trucks and carried 523 sheep away to a military center near Jericho about 60 kilometers away. The sheep were not released before their owners had paid a fine of JD7.5 (US 19 dollars) for each one. According to Jibrin al-Jundi, each sheep actually cost JD20 (US 50 dollars) after adding the transportation expenses.

Now the 50,000 sheep of Yatta are confined to barns, and there is no other grazing area. The mountainous areas of the village are not suitable for grazing and the rest are cultivated with olive trees.

As a result, the sheep owners have suffered heavy losses. They have to buy expensive fodder instead of using the natural grass. At the same time, the price of sheep has gone down sharply because now all the farmers want to sell their sheep. Instead of JD80 (US 200 dollars) for each sheep, the market rate is now only JD27 (US 67.5 dollars). The farmers expect that the 50,000 sheep will drop to only 2000 head within a few months if the Israelis keep al-Masfara closed.

Mustafa Abd al-Fattah, the tribal judge in the village, believes that a dramatic change will occur in the life of the Yatta population because of the Israeli confiscation order. "In view of growing unemployment," he said "most of the population of Yatta, who rely solely on farming and livestock, will face a terrible "economic situation". He explained that the farmers support their families by selling sheep, "but their animal wealth is not endless," he said.

The closure order has already begun to affect some families who have fewer sheep than others. They have begun to send their sons to look for work in Israeli projects. Some have found jobs and others have not. Ibrahim al-Jundi said that he has reached the point where he cannot hire a lawyer for his son who has been held for the last four months on a political charge. "I have sent my other son who had shepherded the sheep to look for work in Israel," he said. In the last few months, he has sold most of his sheep, because he does not have the money to buy fodder. "When we were at al-Masfara, we didn't need to buy fodder at all," he said.

Yatta residents have been thinking of defying the Israeli closure order again, but their fear of the confiscation of their sheep — their only remaining source of income — makes them hesitant. "But we will not give in easily," said one of the village *mukhtars*. "We are seriously considering going back but without our sheep, to cultivate our land." ■

A home in the winter pasture village of *Kherba* now closed.